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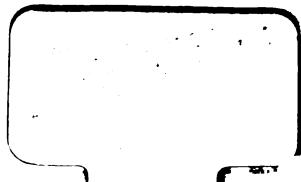
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FABLES

AND OTHER PIECES IN VERSE.

The Work published for the sole Benefit of
MARY MARIA COLLING.

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FABLES
AND OTHER PIECES IN VERSE,

BY
MARY MARIA COLLING.

WITH SOME
ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR,
IN
LETTERS TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.
POET LAUREATE, ETC.

BY MRS. BRAY,
AUTHOR OF "FITZ OF FITZFORD;" "THE TALBA;"
&c. &c.

"One
Not doom'd to ignorance, though forced to tread,
From childhood up, the ways of poverty;
From unreflecting ignorance preserved,
And from debasement rescued — By Thy grace
The particle divine remain'd unquench'd."
WORDSWORTH.

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1831.

48.



DEDICATION

TO THE HONOURABLE

THE MARCHIONESS OF TAVISTOCK.

When Spring, as the queen of the seasons re-
nown'd,

Through nature her beauty displays,
The vallies and woodlands with verdure are
crown'd,

And echo with carols of praise.

While spangled with flowers are mountain and
plain,

And the meadows new beauties assume ;
Mid the splendid display of her beautiful train,
The violet's permitted to bloom.

Content while it blows in its sheltered abode,

It seems as if anxious to please ;
And grateful for favours benignly bestow'd,
It sheds a perfume on the breeze.

Thus humble and grateful my thanks have I
penn'd,

Like the violet a tribute I pay,
And hope that Your Ladyship will condescend
• T' accept it as Gratitude's lay.

How distant the thought, when at morn's twilight
hours

My fancy her theme would pursue,
That the wild strains I sang to the plants and the
flowers,
Would ever be noticed by you !

The kindness which you have conferr'd upon me,
May Heaven in its justice requite !
Its goodness, combined with your own, e'er shall be
Remember'd with grateful delight.

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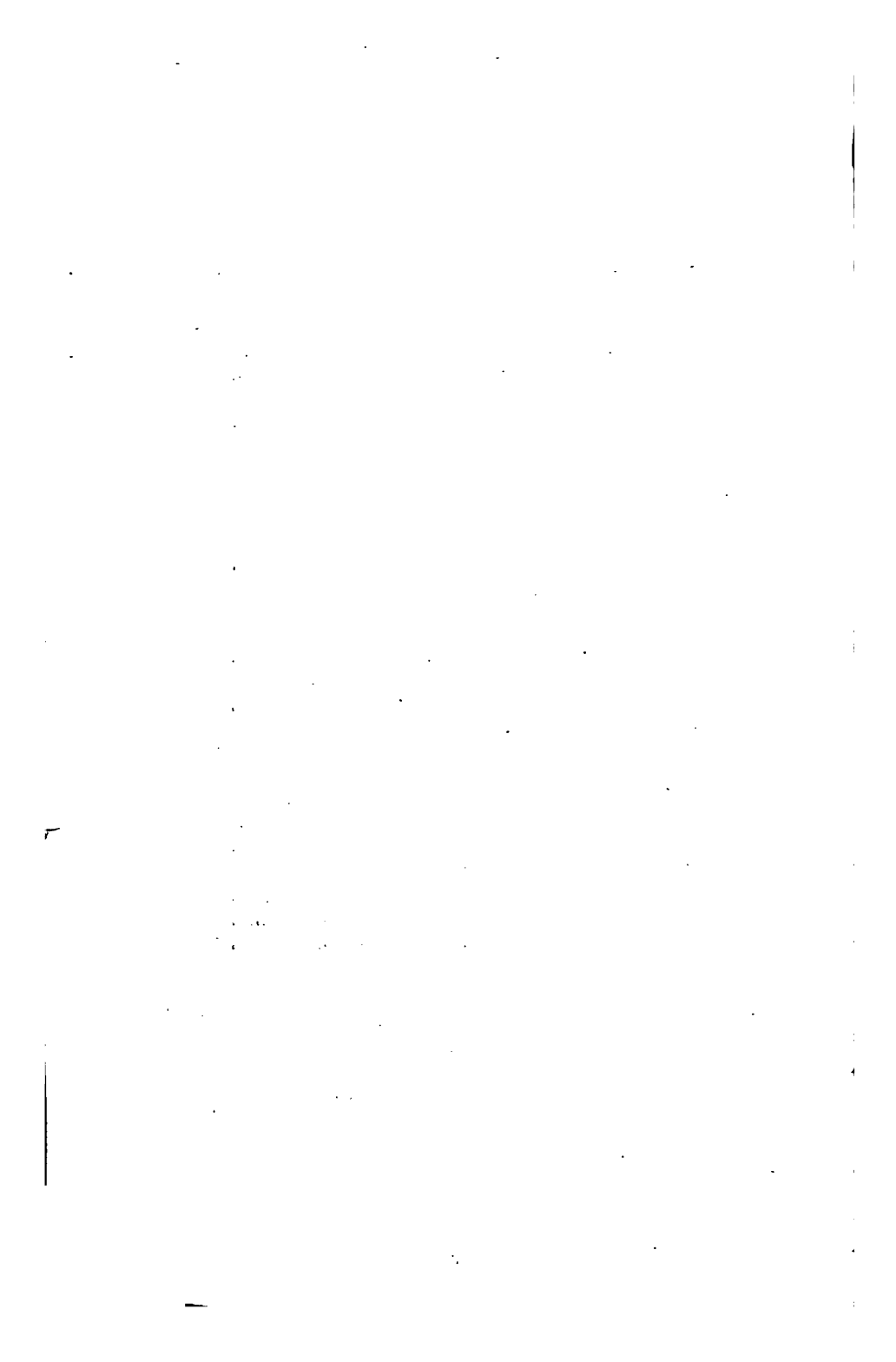
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LETTER I.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.
&c. &c.

Vicarage, Tavistock, Devon,
March 17th, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,

FROM the kind interest you have taken in behalf of Mary Colling, I am induced to give you in this letter a more detailed account of her than I have yet been able to do in my former communications. After she sent her little poems to me, I heard a good deal about her from various quarters; but these accounts not always agreeing together, I determined to learn what I could from the poor girl herself. The first time I saw her, she was so agitated that I gained little intelligence; but the second, taking her into my own room, I did all I could to conciliate her feelings, and having in a great degree overcome her timidity, I obtained from her a regular account of herself, given in the most artless manner. I shall here repeat the

substance of it with every attention to fidelity. My information respecting her singular worth, her early talents, and the excellence of her character, I derived from a lady who has known her from childhood, and from the worthy gentleman in whose family she has lived for so many years.

Before entering, however, on these particulars, it may not be amiss to state that about four or five years since I first observed a young woman, of the humbler class, dressed exceedingly neat, and remarkable on account of the intellectual character of her countenance, who used to sit amongst several poor women immediately under the reading desk of Tavistock church.

I was induced to enquire who she was, and learned that her name was Mary Colling, that she was a servant in a gentleman's family in the place, a clever girl, and fond of poetry. Some time after, I observed she was removed from where I first saw her, and usually took her seat in the pew near our own (belonging to the family in which she lived), where her expressive features and her decorous behaviour, always made me look upon her with peculiar interest: it was not, however, till the 4th of March, 1831, that I became fully aware of her remarkable talents; since on that day I first received from her, through the hands

of one of my own servants, a small parcel, containing a few of her poems, with a request, very modestly preferred, that I would be kind enough to look over them at my leisure, and say what I thought of them. Having stated these few circumstances, I now proceed to mention others of more, I think, than ordinary interest respecting her.

Mary Maria Colling, the daughter of Edmund Colling, husbandman, by his wife Anne, was born at Tavistock, August the 20th, 1805. In her childhood, she was sent to school to an old woman; not so much to learn any thing, as to be kept out of the way. But little Mary was not to be so neglected, for hearing others taught to read, she had a wish to learn also; and her school-mistress finding she made no progress either in sewing or knitting, undertook the task, more congenial to her pupil, of initiating her into a knowledge of the alphabet and the first rudiments of learning. These she speedily acquired; and being possessed of Watts's Hymns, and a sixpenny book that had in it sundry little stories, with some few pieces in verse, she soon became so perfectly well acquainted with their contents, that she knew both books, from beginning to end, by heart; not, however, making the good old woman fully acquainted with

the tenacity of her memory in thus storing itself with what then constituted her whole range of knowledge: so that when her mistress, on account of her negligence with the needle, would sometimes keep her in, after school hours, as a punishment, Mary often managed to soften her displeasure and to gain her own liberty, by repeating something, with the utmost exactness, out of the sixpenny book in which she was set her daily lessons. Before she was five years old, she could read well enough to entertain her grandmother, who was very fond of her.

At ten years of age, she was entered at the free school as a pupil to learn needle-work: there however, some kind ladies — Miss Mary Beauford and Miss Charlotte Bedford — became friends to her, and taught her to read perfectly well, which she could not do till then, though she could write a little before, but can scarcely tell how she learnt to do so. At this school, likewise, she received small praise for sewing, but she wrote from copies, and was considered the spelling wonder amongst the children. Her memory also was surprising; she could repeat any thing by heart with scarcely more trouble than that of reading it over.

However her schooling amounted to very little,

for her object there having been to learn needle-work, she rarely went upon writing days, and her mother also, being repeatedly ill, and having a young family, Mary was obliged to stay at home and nurse her brothers and sisters for weeks together.

When about thirteen years old, she entirely quitted the school; and at this period a beautiful incident occurred in her life. I wish, in repeating it, I could convey to you any idea of the feeling manner with which she related it to me. "It grieved her heart," she said, "to see that her father could neither write nor read, for his Bible could not speak to him; and so she taught him both, herself, before she went to place." On hearing this account of her teaching her father to write and read — the latter that he might be enabled to read his Bible — Mr. Bray remarked that she was not less deserving praise for her filial piety than the Roman daughter who fed her father from her breast; the latter sustained her parent by supplying food for the body, the former gave her father the means of finding it for the mind, and of sustaining his spirit with the bread of life — the word of God. And I may here remark that Miss Charlotte Bedford was first induced to notice her on account of finding

that when a mere child Mary was so amiable and affectionate to her father.

“ At fourteen years old,” she said, “ it pleased God to give her a good service;” for Mrs. General Hughes being in want of a young person to assist in the family, directed one of her servants to enquire after some little girl, who could fill such an easy station, till one, more competent, could be engaged. The servant, in returning home, after a fruitless search, chanced to meet our Mary, who, on hearing the circumstance, most gladly offered her services. The next day she presented herself before Mrs. Hughes, who was so much interested by the artless manners, and the intelligence of the child, that she immediately engaged her; and Mary remained with her kind protectress as long as she lived. “ The dear old lady,” she said, “ was very good to her, and grew as fond of her as if she had been her own child. She died in her arms: and, when upon her death-bed, she charged her son to be a kind friend to poor Mary, and to take care of her; which he has done from that hour to the present: there could not be a better master,” she said, “ nor a better man in the world.”

I must not omit stating, that not long before she became servant to Mrs. Hughes, Mary, ever

anxious to gain her own bread, had taken to a loom to learn the business of weaving; and some neighbour, who saw her thus employed, prophesied, and, as it turned out, truly, "that Providence had designed that child for better things."

On receiving her wages, it had been her custom to spend as small a sum as she possibly could upon her clothes, and to buy little books with the remainder. I have heard also (though not from herself) that she has been very dutiful and generous out of her small means to her family, giving them assistance whenever she could do so. "Her master," she told me, "had been very kind to her; for though ill-natured people had endeavoured to set him against her, because she loved reading, he had never listened to them, but had bought her several good books for her benefit, and some sermons as a present at Christmas." Indeed, it appears that the poor girl's simple accomplishments, and keeping herself from idle company and gossips, have excited a good deal of envy amongst the narrow-minded in her own station and degree. Since her old mistress died, her sister had assisted in the family, though Mary manages, and does nearly all the work herself. Not the least interesting portion of her narrative

was the good practical sense she displayed in telling me her method of housekeeping, &c. Since a severe illness, however, (and, like most poetical temperaments, she is at all times very nervous,) she is not allowed to do any laborious work beyond her strength.

Some few books have been lent to her by her first benefactress, Miss C. Bedford, a lady who, to this day, continues her kind friend. Yet, putting all her reading together, I found it amounted to very little; excepting that she had made herself perfectly well acquainted with that one true book, which, independent of its sacred character, is, perhaps, of all books the most calculated to elevate the mind, and to form a pure, just, and simple taste — the Bible. Here she is quite at home, and knows whole chapters of it by heart. Indeed, her memory is surprising, and her comprehension exceedingly quick.

In the course of conversation I told her, that I had heard, from a lady, she was fond of astronomy: was it true? She replied, “she had once read a book that came in her way, on the subject, as she liked to learn any thing she could, but she knew very little about it; only that she could never look at the beautiful moon and the stars without wishing to understand their courses.”

Finding, excepting in her Bible, that she had really read very little poetry, I asked her how she came to understand such words as zephyrs, Aurora, &c., and that Flora was the goddess of flowers, as I observed allusions to such persons and things continually in her poems. I also asked how she had formed her way of writing, and learnt such bold and forcible expressions? To the former question she replied, "That she had a dictionary; at the end of it there was an explanation about the gods and goddesses, and there she had learnt it: that if she met with a word in reading which she did not understand, she never past it over, but looked it out in her dictionary, and seldom forgot how a word was spelt if she once saw it in print; and as to her language, she had gained that from hearing Mr. Bray preach. To listen to him was her greatest delight, and she thought she owed much to his sermons. As a proof of it," she said, "he had inspired her to attempt poetry." It was on the following occasion, about six years ago, he preached a sermon on the power of God manifested in the creation of the world; she was struck with it, and, on her return home, composed the following, being her first essay in verse, on

CREATION.

Eternal, self-existent God !

Nature thy goodness doth display ;
Thy wonders are dispersed abroad ;
Creation owns thy sovereign sway.

These products of creating skill,
To speak thy glorious praise combine ;
They are subservient to thy will,
And all proclaim thine hand divine.

The spacious firmament* was rear'd,—
Soon as the dread command was given ;
Unnumber'd worlds at once appear'd,
And gemm'd the azure arch of heaven.

Nature thy sovereign voice obeyed ;
Angelic songs it did employ ;
Ten thousand forms at once were made ;
The morning stars they sang for joy.

The wonders of thy mighty hand
Show us thy wisdom is immense ;

* In the sermon, Mr. Bray, I believe, quoted Addison's Hymn, " The spacious firmament," &c. This, probably, may account for her using the expression in the poem.

For there's display'd through every land
 Memorials of Omnipotence.

From heaven, thine own eternal seat,
 Thine eye survey'd this lovely frame,
 And when the system was complete,
 Man was brought in to praise thy name.

The new-born day rose at thy word ;
 'Twas usher'd in with seraphs' lays ;
 They tuned their harps, and forth was pour'd
 A universal tide of praise.

Some time after this, she began to compose her fables, *before* she had ever read any, excepting two or three in *prose*, in the sixpenny book she had learnt by heart, when she was about five years old, at school. Lately somebody had lent her Gay's Fables, but she had yet only read a few of them. In the history of this poor girl's mind — which surely is replete with interest — I was anxious to learn what could have induced her to think of writing fables, not having been, from her own account, at all prompted to do so by reading them. She blushed like crimson when I asked her, smiled, and at last I drew out the confession. She said, " that her master, seeing she did not go

out much, or run about like other girls, from kindness to her gave her a slip of garden to amuse herself with cultivating it in her leisure hours ; till, at length, all the flower garden came under her care. The river Tavy flowed at the foot of it; and here she found the greatest delight. She would tell me truth, though she was afraid to speak it, lest I should think her mazed*; but when of an evening she was amongst the flower beds, and saw them all so lively and so beautiful, *she used to fancy the flowers talked to her.* Thus, a peony growing near her laurel tree, she fancied the one reproaching the other for not being so fine as itself, and so composed her little fable of the ‘ Peony and the Laurel.’ And these kind of thoughts used to come into her head in a moment, and then she turned them into verses and fables.” Is not this poor girl truly a poet of nature? I have not the slightest doubt of what she says; for almost all her fables — and her best fables — relate to flowers and trees. Here is that of

* *Mazed* is a Devonshire expression, meaning mad.

THE PEONY AND THE LAUREL.

Invited by the smile of May,
 A Peony did its blooms display;
 Nigh to it grew a hardy Laurel,
 With whom it thus began to quarrel: —

“ Where is thy taste, how long thou ’st been,
 Array’d in that dark robe of green?
 Sure thou shouldst now wear something gay,
 Which well becomes the month of May.

“ I need not to extol *my* powers,
 For Peonies are majestic flowers;
 Behold my lovely charms outvie
 The blushes of the morning sky.”

The Laurel, conscious of its power,
 Responded to the gaudy flower: —
 “ Frail boaster, thou display’st at once
 Presumption, pride, and ignorance.

“ Though now, in sooth, by thee I’m scorn’d,
 Laurels have conquerors’ brows adorn’d;
 And dost thou think so famed a tree
 Can envy a weak flower like thee?

“ When tempests howl and lightnings glare,
 And thunders rend the boundless air,
 And whirlwinds, with a hideous roar,
 Augment the deep and rock the shore ;

“ Here, like a champion, I defy,
 The insults of the inclement sky :
 But shouldst thou dare to show thine head,
 A single blast would strike thee dead !

“ But what ’s thy low abuse, that I
 Should deem it worth the least reply ?
 Thus much I ’ve said, to let thee know
 My boast is strength, if thine is show.

“ For since I ’m by the wise respected,
 I care not how by fools rejected ;
 Though owls and bats despise the morn,
 The sun will ne’er regard their scorn.”

When I mentioned to Mr. Bray, that she said she used to fancy the flowers talked to her, and that she had composed fables before she had read any, he remarked, that this poor girl, like *Æsop*, was in a state of servitude ; and possibly that persons of their stamp of mind so situated, feeling themselves so far beyond the ordinary society of

their own sphere, might be led to seek it in a world they created for themselves by the vivacity of their own imaginations, and thus hold discourse, as it were, with flowers, and trees, and animals.

I mentioned, I believe, in a former letter, that she had not been in the habit of writing down her compositions, and that when I asked her how she managed to preserve them, she gave me a truly Devonian reply, assuring me that "she could mind them," meaning she could retain them in her memory. I also enquired if any one in the place, besides ourselves, had ever heard her poems. She said "Yes, a few persons had. That some ill-natured people scorned her for writing them, and some thought it wrong in a poor girl at service ; but an old man, whose name was Pearce (and who it appears was the *first* person intrusted with her secret this way), and a few others, liked them pretty well. Her kind and generous master, also, approved them."

I then ventured to tell her my all-powerful secret (for I had not yet disclosed it to her) namely, that I had sent two of her fables to no less a person than Mr. Southey ! and asked her if she really knew who he was. She looked somewhat alarmed, and said, " Oh yes, she had heard

that the gentleman was the King's poet !” I told her not to be frightened, and assured her that the “*King's poet*” was one of the kindest-hearted men in the world, and that I would venture to say in his name (for I had not then received your last letter *), that he would not despise her little verses, but would read them with every indulgence.

Another little anecdote must not be forgotten. She told me that somebody had lent her an old book, containing extracts from different poets. I asked her whose poetry she liked best in it? She answered me, with all the simplicity imaginable, “that there were some extracts from a person whose name was Shakspeare, and she thought she liked them the best.” †

Knowing how close a union there is at all times between poetry, flowers, and love, I ventured to

* In the letter here alluded to, Mr. Southey, with that generous feeling towards the luckless children of the muses by which he has ever been distinguished, not less than by his transcendent genius, offered, should a volume of Mary's Fables, &c., be prepared for the press, not only to subscribe to it himself, but to endeavour to interest his friends in her behalf. Mr. Southey likewise, as a mark of kindness, did the poor girl the honour of presenting her with a copy of his beautiful poem of “*Madoc*.”

† Messrs. Longman, Rees, & Co., with a kindness that did them honour, not long after this letter was written, presented Mary Colling with a copy of Shakspeare's Plays.

ask if she had a sweetheart. She smiled and said, "Oh, no, she could read and amuse her mind, in her leisure hours, with making verses, and with her flower-garden, and that made her quite happy : she did not want one."

I do not think there is any danger that this poor girl's head will be turned by any notice of her. She is very modest, and seems imbued with a deep sense of religious feeling, the surest safeguard against vanity; since such a fault is seldom found in a mind accustomed to serious thoughts on sacred subjects. It is more frequently the vice of those who think too much about themselves, and too little about their God.

She has the Devonshire accent, but not coarsely; and, though a perfect country girl in every thing, — in her smile, her cap, her little straw bonnet, and her curtsy, — yet there is nothing vulgar about her. The elevated feelings of her character have given to her manners that indescribable mark of mind, which shows itself amidst the greatest simplicity, and is never to be mistaken.

As, in noticing those who are at all distinguished for talent or worth, it is customary to say something of their persons, I may be allowed, perhaps, to state, that nature has been liberal to her in this particular. Her features are regularly handsome,

especially the forehead, eyebrows, and eyes; the latter peculiarly so when animated in conversation. And I may here observe, that Mary Colling the servant, and Mary Colling talking about poetry and flowers, scarcely appears to be one and the same person. If I had not seated her for a couple of hours by my side, and won upon her to open her heart, I should never even have guessed the animated interesting being she could become in conversation.

I do assure you, when I looked on the beautiful expression of her countenance, so tempered with modesty, and listened to the feeling modulation of her voice, "soft and low," for she has that "excellent thing in woman," as she repeated to me her own admirable lines on Creation, I could not help entertaining for her a degree of admiration that was not unmixed with reverence and regard.

Should it be the will of God that this poor girl is to be benefited by our means, I can only say I shall most happily become the instrument.

I hope you will not think me superstitious, if I confess to you that I love to trace events through the most apparently trifling links of that chain which leads to their source. It certainly was something quite out of the usual course of things that Mary should have sent her little poems to me

(and not the best of them either) at such a time — on the very day I was about to reply to your letter, and when my own feelings had been so recently impressed with your kindness to me, that mine were but the more open to her. I have only to add, that she bears an unblemished character, and I have every cause to think will not disgrace the good gifts Providence has so amply bestowed upon her. You will also be glad to learn, that, since I commenced my letter, a lady of this place, Miss Mary Beauford, whose good sense and kind heart are ever active in promoting the welfare of the humbler classes, called upon me, and expressed her readiness to assist in any plan that might be set on foot for Mary's benefit. Mary's worthy master, Mr. Hughes, has likewise, in the most generous manner, expressed the same resolution; so I hope on my return from London, which I am soon about to visit, that we shall be able to bring out a little volume of her poems to do credit to Tavistock.

She has this moment sent me a beautiful plant from her garden, and a copy of verses, expressive of her grateful feelings for the little kindness I have shown her? Could there be a more graceful mode of returning it?

Praying you to excuse the length of my letter
in behalf of the poor poet, for whom you have
expressed so kind an interest,

Allow me, my dear Sir,
The honour to remain, with grateful respect,
Most truly yours,
ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

LETTER II.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

&c. &c.

Vicarage, Tavistock,
March 25th, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,

WHEN you so kindly advised me to collect for a local history "those short and simple annals of the poor, which ought not to be forgotten," how little did I think that within a few days, as it were, after receiving your letter, I should have so many particulars to relate to you respecting Mary Colling! and as little did I expect, when I made that communication, that it would so soon be followed with a relation of other circumstances concerning her family, certainly possessing a more than ordinary interest; and, probably, in early life, having an influence on the remarkable genius of this poet of nature: for such, and a genius of a superior order, I am much inclined to believe you will consider her, when you shall have read one of her poems, "The Birth of Envy," that will be found in this letter before I bring it to a close.

Since I had last the pleasure of writing to Keswick, Mr. Hughes, the worthy master of this worthy girl, and for whom she seems to feel that sort of grateful respect and regard which Louise did for Oberlin, has obliged me with some interesting particulars concerning her family; and from the girl herself I have also derived additional information. I now take up my pen to relate the little tale to you, in whose bosom lowly virtue and luckless talent are sure to meet with generous sympathy and regard.

Mary Colling, when not more than five years old, lost her maternal grandmother, a person whose strong affection for the child made so powerful an impression on her young and artless feelings, that it is to this day fresh and vigorous. The character and history, especially in regard to her marriage, of this deceased relative, appear to have been so remarkable, and considering, also, how much she influenced the early feelings of our Mary, that they must not be passed in silence when stating the particulars of her story. Much of the narrative I have now to relate will appear like a romance, since it has an abundance of the misfortune, and not a little of the mystery, that adds so much interest to works of fiction in the drama or the novel.

Mary's maternal grandfather, George Philp, was a native of Tavistock, respectably born, though, by various mischances, his friends were so reduced in the world that they caused George to follow the business of a tailor. Mr. Hughes was assured by a lady of this place, now dead, a Mrs. Murray, who knew him well, that Philp was one of the handsomest young men she had ever beheld. His education had been better than his fortunes; he had a high spirit, and longed for manly enterprize. His business of a tailor, therefore, became a subject of discontent to him, and the good town of Plymouth (only fourteen miles off), with its port and its fine shipping, was for ever in his mind, and he, like Robinson Crusoe, would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea; though, also, like the hero of De Foe, he was not wanting in friends who assured him that if he did so, "God would not bless him." But youth, ardour, and ambition have each a voice more powerful than that of prudence; so away went George Philp, and leaving his shears and his thimble, and Tavistock, and all care behind him, he became as gay and as gallant a sailor as ever ploughed the wild ocean in the service of the king.

For some few years nothing was heard of him; till at length, to the wonder of all Tavistock,

George Philp suddenly appeared in his native town, bringing with him a young and beautiful bride, whose manners, appearance, and the possession of several rings, &c. all proclaimed her to be of a rank much above that of the handsome sailor to whom she was wedded.

Philp and his bride were universally admitted to be the finest couple that had ever been seen in Tavistock ; and on the Sunday after his return, it was with evident delight and pride that George carried her to church, to attend divine service. Every body admired her, and every body enquired who she might be, and nobody could answer, since nothing was known to satisfy such enquiries ; the bride and bridegroom maintaining the utmost reserve on all that related to the subject of their marriage. Whatever might have been the family of the bride, or the worth of her jewels, it appeared she had no money ; for George Philp, whose spirit of enterprize had yielded, perhaps, to one of a tenderer nature, in order to maintain himself and his wife, instead of mounting the deck, was once more obliged to mount the shop-board at his old business in Tavistock. For awhile curiosity and rumour busied themselves to the full in endeavouring to " pluck out the heart of his mystery ; " but these, unsatisfied, gradually died

away, and the people were content to say, that "Mrs. Philp was for certain a gentlewoman born, but a very wisht* sort of a body."

Her character and her manners, from all I can learn at this distance of time, were marked and peculiar. She did not seem happy, but she never complained. She had a high independent spirit, but refused no employment, however mean, to earn bread for her children. She was ardently fond of her husband, but kept aloof from his connections. She was well-bred to all persons, but associated with no one; and though in her way of life, in her dress and her industry, she entirely suited herself to her condition (and that was truly a poor one), yet she never parted from her few jewels till, long after, absolute want compelled her to do so. To all enquiries relative to her own family, for many years she remained totally silent. However, after her severe misfortunes — which I shall presently have occasion to relate — something of her history became known, though, even to her own children, and to the day of her death, she was never very communicative upon the sub-

* *Wisht* is a favourite expression in Devonshire, meaning melancholy, dull, &c.; it is most probably a corruption of wistful.

ject. The following particulars will not be read without interest.

It appears that Mrs. Philp's maiden name was Domville*, and that she had been left an orphan at an early age, both her parents dying of the small-pox. Her maternal uncle, whose name was White, lived near Arundel in Sussex; and after the death of her parents he took her home, treated her with every kindness, and gave her, when she was old enough to know their use, valuable clothes, and some jewels that had belonged to her mother. Mary Domville grew up a beautiful girl, and though a favourite, was nevertheless so high-spirited, that, not wishing to be obliged to her relative for support, she left the comfortable asylum his house had afforded her, and fled to the Isle of Wight. If she took offence at any thing in her uncle's conduct towards her, it does not appear. To whom she fled, or by what means, is likewise unknown. She acknowledged having there entered into the service of two sisters, as a sort of attendant or upper servant; but these ladies, seeing how much she was above her condition, treated her as a friend and companion, and

* Mary Colling tells me, she does not know if the name might be Domville or Donville, as she never saw it written. Might it not have been D'Enville?

became exceedingly attached to her. The uncle traced her out; and, at various times, endeavoured to prevail with her to return to his protection: but all his solicitations proved vain; she would never live with him again.

Whilst in the Isle of Wight she first saw George Philp, the young and handsome sailor. A mutual attachment followed, and the same rash spirit that had tempted her, perhaps, to quit the asylum of her uncle's roof, might now have induced her to enter upon a hasty and unadvised marriage. Be this as it may, married she was; and whatever had been the rashness of her former conduct, her wedded life was without reproach. She bore her change of fortune with resignation; made a tender mother, and an industrious, affectionate wife.

For some years George Philp continued in business; but it is most likely he still entertained a lingering regard for his late profession, and would much rather have plied the oar on the broad ocean, than the needle and shears on the shop-board of a country town. However, he had made a resolution to abandon the seafaring life for ever. But his resolution, may be, was something like Benedict's, who, when he determined to die single, thought he should never live to be

married ; for, on the first temptation, it melted away like ice before the sun. A fine frigate, the *Vestal*, was launched at Plymouth, and fitted out for a particular service in the formation of a settlement in some far-distant and foreign land. The crew were all picked men ; and the gallantry and spirit of George Philp being well known to the late Admiral Vincent, he was recommended by this gentleman to the officer in command, and speedily nominated to a confidential appointment, with an offer of support, likewise, for his youthful son, would he join his father in the enterprize. George Philp, full of golden dreams of success and ambition, in the same buoyancy of spirit with which he had first gone to sea so many years before, now accepted this new offer of service ; and his son, a fine lad of fourteen years old, gladly consented to join his father in the voyage.

All was arranged, and the morning came on which George was to bid adieu to his wife and to his native town, once more to seek an uncertain fortune amidst the dangers and the toils of the sea. Mrs. Philp, whose affection for her husband and her son was well known, supported this trial with that peculiar and marked restraint she had, in so many instances since her marriage, placed as a curb upon her strong and high feelings. It was a

scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. George wept; but she shed no tear whilst he was in her sight, and continued to hold her babe, of four months old, at her bosom, whilst another child, a girl nine years of age, hung about her father, and, crying, asked him, "When he would come back again, and why he went away to sea from herself and her mother?"

The boy, whose nature was exceedingly affectionate, kissed his mother a thousand times, and, as he did so, gave her a parting gift, the model of a little pair of andirons *, as a chimney ornament, that he had bought as a remembrance for her at Plymouth; and promised her "that he would bring her a token from every foreign land on which he set his foot." The last kiss was given; the mother's last blessing was bestowed; and that last look, which turns again and again, till it is blinded with tears, was fixed on the sorrowing mother and bereaved wife. George departed, leading by the hand his youthful son, to follow his dreams of ambition; and his deserted partner was left with God for her hope, and her infants for her care, to maintain them as she best could till her husband's return.

* Mary Colling keeps them to this day as a relic.

She bore her trial with meek resignation, and laboured only for bread. She said little : but as month after month rolled on, and no news came from George or her son, her countenance grew sad : she could scarcely take her daily food : nights were passed in tears, and her heart so failed her in the day, that nothing but love, which in a mother's heart for her offspring is " strong as death," could have enabled her to earn for her two children a trifling and necessary pittance.

The dreary months fled on, and still no news came. Every time the wind blew she was observed to shudder. If an old newspaper lay in her way, she would snatch it up, tremble, and look pale, as her eyes eagerly sought the corner that gave intelligence of the shipping. And then she would often ask how long a vessel might be going to Newfoundland, and how soon news might be brought home about it ; for the Vestal, she knew, was to touch there in its voyage. These, and a thousand more questions, she would ask, but she was never satisfied ; for none could give her a word of intelligence, or of hope, excepting the old and common-place theme of consolation, which every neighbour had in his mouth, " that no news was good news, and so she had best make her mind easy." The fever of suspense, of anxious days

and sleepless nights, — the sight of her children, not knowing if they were fatherless, or if she might herself be wife or widow, — preyed on her heart, affected her health, and would in all probability have destroyed her, had she not been called upon to a new exertion of the energies of her naturally strong character; and that by the confirmation, if confirmation it could be deemed, of the very calamity she had so long dreaded in all the intense agonies of suspense.

In her course, it was well known the *Vestal* was to pass Newfoundland. A vessel — supposed from the distance of time elapsed since the frigate had quitted England, and other circumstances, to have been the *Vestal* — was heard, by another ship also exposed to the storm, firing guns of distress in the midst of a tempest off Newfoundland. Gun after gun was fired; but there was no hope they could be saved: the winds and waves mocked the signal of misery. A boat was put out; human souls were in it — a wave came, and they were nothing. Another boat followed; it had the same fate: whilst the ship, like a parent who sees the children of her bosom die around her, at last sunk, having lived to witness the ruin and the fall of her sons.

Mary Colling, when a child, had, to use her

own words, "often heard tell of the loss of the ship in a storm, in which it was supposed her grandfather and his son had perished." The following poem, though written by her in after life, may, probably, owe its birth to the thoughts and feelings awakened in her young mind by the relation of the melancholy circumstance, as she would sit and listen to it on the knees of her beloved grandmother : —

THE STORM.

Behold, the sky is overcast,
 With a terrific gloom ;
 The doleful night is hastening fast,
 And brings impending doom.

The atmosphere's in tumults hurl'd,
 And from the frowning north,
 The storm upon the watery world,
 In fury marches forth.

The bosom of the mighty deep,
 Is swell'd, and day departs ;
 As bursting from a silent sleep,
 Gigantic horror starts.

Its darkening waves with fearful force,
 The angry ocean lifts ;
 The billows overflow their course,
 And sweep the lofty cliffs.

On high the shivering vessel rocks,
 Upon the ambitious wave ;
 The seaman's art and skill it mocks,
 And threatens a watery grave.

The lightnings dart : with awful glare,
 Fast fly the vivid flakes ;
 The thunder rends the boundless air,
 And Heaven's high vault it shakes.

While toss'd upon the deep abyss,
 The hapless seamen give
 The mournful signal of distress,
 But none can them relieve.

They can no where for shelter hide,
 To shun the ruthless foe ;
 Danger looks big on every side,
 They fear increase of woe.

All gracious Heaven, in mercy deign,
 Their hapless state to view !

Thou can'st the raging winds restrain,
And calm the ocean too.

Danger her direful yell repeats,
Thy pity now they crave :
Oh ! let them know the power that threats
Is still as strong to save.

To stormy winds thou giv'st decree,
Thy judgments to fulfil :
As heralds of thy majesty,
They all obey thy will.

To return to the narrative — the conduct of the unfortunate widow of George Philp was as marked and as characteristic of high-spirited independence as had been all the former acts of her life. When the account came of the loss of the vessel off Newfoundland, and that there was every reason to suppose it was the Vestal that had thus foundered, her composure and resigned demeanour returned. She had now two fatherless children and herself to support by her own and sole exertions ; since, such were the peculiar feelings of her mind, she would accept of no assistance from any one ; and, though kindly advised to attempt it, refused to hold any communication with her own

family to procure relief for her children in this day of distress. The motive for such refusal she would never divulge to the hour of her death; and, though so proud in independence, she was most humble in toiling for her daily bread, laboured incessantly, and declined not the meanest employment by which she could maintain herself and her little ones. She would often (so Mary tells me) toil all day, come home in the evening to give food to her children, place them in bed, cry over them, and look upon the last little present given her by her lost son, and go out again to her work, and labour sometimes till twelve o'clock at night ere she took the least rest. Her few jewels were now sold, one by one, not according to their value, but for what she could most readily get for them to help her necessities.

She had one ring, I think it was diamond, that she had reserved for the last. Some dear remembrance was, in all probability, connected with it; for, like Isabella, she had preserved it through all her misery; and now, like her also, parted with it to "stop the cries of hunger for a time." It was sold for three guineas, being nothing in comparison with its actual value. Possibly this was the last relic of her better fortunes; for after the ring was gone, she was scarcely ever heard to

allude to her former life or to her family, even in the presence of her own daughters. One of them married Edmund Colling, the father of our poet. The child was named Mary *Maria* (being, in fact, a repetition of the first name), at the express desire of her maternal grandmother Philp, for such had been the favourite names in her own family.

Mary Colling, who was only five years old when this beloved grandmother died, tells me she has the most distinct remembrance of her; and that "she did not talk like Devonshire people." There was something high-spirited and reserved about her to most persons, but to little Mary she was gentleness and affection itself. She has never yet talked to me about her grandmother without shedding tears, and speaks of her with a warmth of gratitude that it is delightful to witness. She has, indeed, those strong and genuine emotions that frequently show themselves in an honest burst of feeling.

When the widow of George Philp grew old, though in extreme poverty, and no longer capable of work, she would willingly have starved rather than have sought relief from the parish; but she was at length prevailed with by her neighbours to accept it. To the last, her reserve, her calm

but high spirit, her ardent affection for her grandchild Mary, who was her chief care even on her death-bed, never deserted her; and she expired as she lived, firm, collected, and resigned. Mary Colling perfectly well remembers attending her grandmother on her death-bed; and that not long before she died, she embraced her, and as she bestowed her last blessing, wished “that she was in Abraham’s bosom, and could carry that dear little lamb thither in her own.”

The child Mary loved her most affectionately; and, after her eyes were closed in death, for some time she thought her sleeping. She shed many bitter tears, and when she saw her grandmother did not wake up again, she stole to the bed and kissed her. To this hour she remembers her funeral, as the saddest day of her own life. And she told me, when I noticed having first seen her in the aisle of Tavistock church, under the reading desk, that she used to sit there from a melancholy recollection, not, however, unmixed with pleasing feelings, that it was *there*, when a child of four or five years old, whilst seated by the knees of her beloved grandmother, she had first listened to the word of God, and learnt to call upon His name that he would bless her.

Many years after these events, Mary Colling

wrote the following lines, which, I am sure, you will agree with me in thinking are full of tender and beautiful feeling: —

ON THE DEATH OF MY MATERNAL
GRANDMOTHER.

Oh ! what can Memory's page efface,
Since Gratitude can thus retrace
These lines of tenderness and grief,
Nor time nor death shall blot the leaf?

The names of those we once held dear,
When water'd by Affection's tear,
Within our bosoms sweetly bloom,
As if transplanted from the tomb.

Affection loves the sad employ,
The grief which steals a secret joy;
That softly strikes, but sweetly heals,
The tender smart that nature feels.

This from experience well I know,
Conscious what gratitude I owe
To one who hath resign'd her breath,
And sleeps within the arms of Death.

Blest shade ! accept my humble lay ;
 'Tis all that tenderness can pay,
 For all thy toils and all thy cares,
 Bestowed upon mine infant years.

Anxious to guard, intent to please,
 'Twas thine to give my bosom ease ;
 And oft, while pillow'd on thy breast,
 A kiss upon my cheek was prest.

What joy was in my bosom raised,
 When by thy kindness I was prais'd ;
 Or ran to thee and sought relief
 For every little infant grief !

What was my joy, what was my pride,
 I mind * when prattling by thy side ;
 When oft thy feeble arms would stretch,
 To pick the flowers above my reach.

No wants from thee did I conceal ;
 I sought thine house at every meal ;
 Though e'er so little thine might be,
 A bit was always saved for me.

* I *mind*, is a Devonshire expression for I remember or bear in mind.

When stretch'd upon the bed of death,
I heard thee speak with falt'ring breath ;
Though thy departure was so near,
I was the object of thy care.

And when the vital spark was fled,
I fondly climb'd beside thy bed ;
Not knowing then what death could mean,
I kissed thee o'er and o'er again :

But seem'd affronted in my mind,
Thinking that thou wert grown unkind,
And wonder'd what the cause could be
That thou no kiss returned to me.

I mind when on thy burial day,
With grief I saw thee borne away ;
I then was told I should not mourn,
For by and by thou would'st return.

These hopes awhile did I maintain,
That I should see thy face again ;
And often thought how long 'twould be,
Before thou would'st return to me.

High were my expectations grown,
Till Reason's light began to dawn :

The fond mistake she soon remov'd,
And chased the hopes I long had lov'd.

These thoughts renew'd create a sigh,
And I with nature will comply ;
The tears which now fast fall can prove,
That I remember still thy love.

Oh, yes ! perhaps to thee 'tis known,
How oft I've sat and wept alone ;
When there the artless tear might be,
Unseen by all save Heaven and thee.

Each word by thy fond lips express'd,
Is still the treasure of my breast ;
When thy remembrance, oft renew'd,
Is by affection's tear bedew'd.

Some singularity is likewise attached to Mary Colling on her father's side.* Her paternal

* The family of Colling (formerly spelt Collyn) appears to have been an ancient one in the county of Devon. In a parochial document appertaining to the church of St. Eustace, and called " The account of Thomas Boles and John Collyn, wardens of the churche of Tavystock, in the yere of our Lorde Godd one thowsande ffye hundred fflower schore and nyne," there is the following entry in the " Receipts for

grandfather was a highly respectable yeoman, occupying on his life only (in other days a common tenure in Devon) two farms. He had eight sons. Edmund, the youngest, the father of our poet, was a helpless infant when *his* father died; and his property falling with him, the family, already suffering by sundry misfortunes, were reduced to such a state of distress, that the child, Edmund, was (to repeat the words of Mr. Hughes) "left as a godsend to the parish."

At seven years old, the boy, who had been taught nothing, was bound as an apprentice to a farmer. Misfortune still pursued him; for this farmer proved to be a hard-hearted wretch, who used the lad cruelly; he had no bed to lie upon, and was so starved, that, Mary assured me, want of necessary food had often obliged her father to take potatoes out of the ground, and roast them as well as he could where they were burning bate for manure in the fields, according to the peculiar

the buryalle and bell." — "Receaved for all the bells upon the death of Ewestices (Eustace) Collyn viiid." — Vide Notices of Tavistock Abbey, by A. J. Kempe, F.S.A.

From the above entry it is evident that Eustace Collyn must have been a man of some note, as he had *all* the bells tolled at his funeral; a custom by no means common in those days, and confined, indeed, to persons of wealth or consequence.

custom of manuring this county. Her father, I have great pleasure in saying, is a very worthy honest man, and to this day is employed as a working assistant to the parochial surveyor of highways.

I have only a few particulars to add about Mary Colling, before I take my leave. Inoffensive, humble, and amiable as she really is, she has, notwithstanding, been assailed by envy and malice, on account of her living so much to herself, and avoiding that sort of idle society that could never be pleasing to a mind like hers. She told me, that at one time these attacks had made her very ill; that she used to lie crying in her bed at the thoughts of them; and whilst so ill she had made up her mind to die, and then felt perfectly calm and happy. Possibly these petty attacks of envy and malice might have given birth to the following poem, which has surprised us as much as any other of her productions. When I recollect that the writer of it is an uneducated servant girl in a country town, who has read few books, and very little poetry; that she has mingled in no society whatever at all capable of leading or improving her taste; and that, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, there may be traced in her "Birth of Envy" a spirit which resembles that of

Gray in his Norse poetry,—I confess I am truly astonished. But here is the poem to speak for itself.

THE BIRTH OF ENVY.

'Twas midnight — and the whirlwind's yell
Had started Horror from her cell ;
The beasts, appall'd, mid nature moan'd,
The ocean rav'd, the forest groan'd.

The heavens put on their blackest frown ;
Each star a direful ray shot down ;
When Etna, with a thundering yell,
Foam'd out on earth the hag of hell.

As through the world she swiftly glided,
The winds her snaky locks divided ;
Ten thousand hisses rent the air ;
Her eagle talons wrought despair.

Fair flowers were blasted by her breath,
And she was arm'd with more than death ;
For youth and age, and virtue's self,
Fell victims to the green-eyed elf.

In sulph'rous glooms she rode along ;
Flames play'd around her forky tongue ;

Her canker'd breast hove with despair —
Hell's blackest curse held empire there.

Envy the scourge of earth did prove,
For Hate usurp'd the place of Love;
Dissensions rose, and dead was fame,
And Friendship dwindled to a name.

I shall be anxious to hear your opinion of the poor girl's talent that could produce such a personification of Envy as the above. Mary tells me she recollects having seen, when a child, a picture of Envy in some little book, where the genius of this evil passion was represented with snakes about her hair, and that flames were seen coming from her mouth. It made a strong impression on her youthful fancy; she never forgot it.

It is very remarkable that she should have sent to us her weakest poems first; but I think I can account for it. She is so modest, and so wholly unconscious of what she does best, that she fancied such poems as resembled what she had now and then read in a book as it came in her way, would please most; and so she sent me verses that talked about little birds and blooming sprays, &c. But the original conceptions of her strong mind and

feelings she kept back, fearing we might not like them.

I have seen a great deal of her during the last week ; and I confess to you that her warm, affectionate, and grateful heart has won upon me even more than her poetry. She is a most interesting person, and I do not doubt will be worthy any little good we can do for her. The errors of her poetry are not many ; they consist principally in bad rhymes, such as *morn* and *storm*, and writing *thou comes*, instead of *thou comest*, &c. The other evening, when I pointed out to her a few things of this sort, and advised her to re-write a stanza or so in one of her poems, she made me her little country courtesy, and said, " If I pleased she would endeavour to do so at home, for somehow or other there were only two or three places in which she could think of verses. One was amongst the flower beds, the other in her own room, but the chief and favourite place was in a certain old chair that stood in a corner of her kitchen. There, with her two companions, her canary * and her

* Her canary bird appears to be as great a wonder as herself ; for she assures me (and so have others) it can talk, and say " Pretty Dick," and " Pretty little dear." The poor talking canary now gives her trouble, for, as she tells me, " it is like to die."

little dog, Dimpler, at her side, she delighted to sit and make her poetry."

Her favourite dog, however, tore up a neighbour's garden in so sad a manner that he has been given away. She cried about it "scores of times," she said, but he comes every day to see her. Before she was obliged to part with him, Dimpler and herself went one evening to take a walk together to Crowndale, a beautiful valley watered by the river Tavy, where the celebrated mariner, Sir Francis Drake, was born. Beguiled by the beauty of the scene at the evening hour, Mary lingered longer than she should have done, and, not being much accustomed to ramble from home, could not readily find her way back again. Whilst herself and her little four-footed companion were doubtfully retracing their road, she amused her mind by thus prettily addressing him.

TO MY LITTLE DOG DIMPLER.

Sweet creature, turn, I think it's best,
 The sky is getting dark ;
 The gentle lambs are gone to rest,
 So, Dimpler, do not bark.

The tears of night begin to fall,
 The wandering breezes sigh ;
 The birds have ceased their songs, and Sol
 Hath closed his radiant eye.

Enwrapt in gloom the woodland lies,
 And all is dark and drear ;
 But soon the lamp of night will rise,
 Our gloomy path to cheer.

Though nothing in the world's esteem,
 Perhaps despised ; but, lo !
 I'm here as happy as a queen,
 And is not Dimpler so ?

We'll cheerly pass the lonesome way ;
 Come, pretty creature, come ;
 There's nothing now to court our stay,
 And so we'll hasten home.

With thee I'm pleased : the noisy throng
 To me no joys afford ;
 Where slander whets her venom'd tongue
 With each unguarded word.

And virtue's wreath she soon devours,
 And sows the seeds of death ;

And thus displays more blasting powers
Than Etna's fiery breath.

Of late, I've by experience found,
She plays the wily part,
And lays her secret snares to wound
My unsuspecting heart.

But all such tales I will suspend,
Such thoughts I now may chide,
While such a little faithful friend
Is fawning by my side.

I know thou play'st a faithful part ;
And may that part be mine,
And all my actions prove a heart
So void of guile as thine.

I have only to add that the few verses she now takes the liberty of addressing to you are, as well as being her own composition, in her own hand writing. She begged me to take charge of them, with her "most humble and grateful duty to the kind gentleman." Such were her words, and I have faithfully reported them. As all her feelings, if of poetry, pleasure, or gratitude, connect themselves with flowers, you would have had a very

fine plant sent, as an offering of thanks, from her garden, could I have taken charge of it.

Hoping that the accounts I have been able to collect respecting this poor girl and her poems, may afford some little interest or amusement to the fire-side of Keswick,

Allow me, my dear Sir,
 The honour to remain,
 Yours most faithfully,
 ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

POET LAUREATE, &c. &c.

On being told by Mrs. Bray, that he had most kindly noticed me and my little verses.

As the flower that is bathed in the tears of the night,
 Will breathe forth its fragrance, the boon to requite;
 So, when kindness hath kindled delight in the heart,
 To breathe forth its feelings is gratitude's part.

And since condescension my lay hath beguiled,
 Forgive, Sir, the boldness of Nature's rude child;
 Permit me to thank you with humble respect,
 For goodness so great, which I ne'er could expect.

To you, by the Muse, were your laurels assign'd,
That her nurslings beneath them protection might
find,

Your care is display'd like the sun which bestows
A ray on the violet as well as the rose.

Although to acknowledge is all I can do,
I'm conscious that much I'm indebted to you;
And if Heaven to my prayer a kind answer will
send,
Then the smiles of its goodness your path shall
attend.

MARY MARIA COLLING.

LETTER III.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Vicarage, Tavistock,
June 22. 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I had last the pleasure of writing to Keswick, Mary Colling has placed in my hands nearly the whole of her fables and other pieces. I have this week been busied in arranging them for the press. One or two of her poems ("May Showers," for instance, which you saw in its original and rude shape) I had some thoughts of rejecting from the volume altogether. But on reading it over with my husband and my nephew, who is with us, it struck us, that however faulty it might be as a composition, and containing many repetitions, nevertheless there was in it some lines not wanting in merit. We determined, therefore, to advise her to omit certain verses that repeated the same ideas, and to change the position of others. To this she readily consented; and the same plan has been pursued in one or two other pieces.

The lines on the "Death of an Infant" have undergone some alteration; and a word or a correction have occasionally been suggested. I mention this, in order that by making known to you what has been done for her (and it is very slight), she may not lose any part of that credit due to herself alone, by the supposition of her having had more assistance than is really the case.

If you had seen the whole of her little pieces, I should not venture to offer any remarks to you upon them; but as you have not, I may, perhaps, be allowed to observe that, in reading over *all* her fables, I have remarked a great sameness as to *subject*, yet a surprising versatility in giving variety even to this very sameness. One merit in particular distinguishes most of them: it is, that instead of making her moral a concluding verse, or sentence, by itself, (as is too much the case, at least with English fabulists,) she combines it with the fable: in fact, makes the story speak its own moral.

In some of her fables there is another strong resemblance (for the above is one) to a delightful author, with whose language she is not only unacquainted, but whose name I will venture to assert she never even heard, till Mr. Bray, one evening, spoke of him to her — La Fontaine.

For instance, her "Shrub and Mushroom" (which I shall transcribe in this letter) has in it the same kind of pointed wit and vivacity, that so eminently distinguishes the works of the French fabulist; and her "Bees and the Drone" bears a marked resemblance to his "La Cigale et la Fourmi:" beginning,

" La cigale, ayant chanté
Tout l'été," &c.

Here is her fable of

THE BEES AND THE DRONE.

Some bees, which well employed their hours
In gathering sweets from fragrant flowers,
Had stored their cells for wintry days,
Then lived in harmony and ease.
But, during Winter, lo ! a drone
Came to their cells and made a moan ;
He, in the summer, lived at leisure
And flew about to take his pleasure.
" Your humble servant, sirs," said he,
" I'm come to crave your charity :
I know that you have stores of meat,
And I have not one bit to eat."

" But you," replied the bees, " have lurk'd
 About in summer while we work'd ;
 For had you work'd, you know and see,
 You might have stores as well as we :
 And though you now have nought to eat,
 In vain you seek from us a treat ;
 That we've provisions, it is true,
 But not for idlers such as you !"

The drone thus answer'd, — " I confess,
 I thought you would relieve distress."
 The bees rejoin'd, " Your labour's lost ;
 With us you no success shall boast ;
 We did not follow our pursuits
 For idlers to enjoy the fruits."

THE SHRUB AND THE MUSHROOM.

One morning, as a mushroom's head
 Was raised above its grassy bed,
 Thus said a shrub which near it grew : —
 " Good morrow, sir, and how are you ?"
 The mushroom thus replied : — " You brat,
 I pray suspend your saucy chat ;
 No more such things to me rehearse ;
 Go with your equals and converse."
 The shrub then answer'd, " No one cares,
 Though mushrooms give themselves such airs ;

You seem yourself to over-rate ;
 I hate to hear an upstart prate !
 Then, since you make so much ado,
 Dear bless me, sir, and what are you ?
 To ask but this may be more right,
 Where was Sir Mushroom's state last night ?"

In the following there is also a striking resemblance to the point and terseness of *La Fontaine*.

THE IVY AND THE MYRTLE.

An ivy round a tower did climb,
 And well conceal'd the scars of time ;
 A fragrant myrtle grew hard by
 Whose beauty charm'd each traveller's eye.
 The ivy was with envy fired,
 Because the myrtle was admired ;
 Its anger could not be repress'd,
 And thus the myrtle it address'd : —
 " Whenever folks this way resort,
 To you they pay uncommon court ;
 I do not know how you esteem it,
 But downright flattery I deem it.
 Think what you please, but well 'tis known,
 Partiality to you is shown ;
 Else why should I escape their view ?
 I'm always green as well as you.

Since charms alone in you they see;
 Of plants what judges they must be!
 There is not one within my view,
 But what I should prefer to you.
 What in a myrtle can be viewed?
 I'm sure an ivy is as good;
 And folks, their praises should divide."
 When, lo! the myrtle thus replied: —
 "If I'm still praised, and you are slighted,
 Why is your envy thus excited?
 Sure you can show no just pretence,
 That I'm e'er praised at your expense!
 Long to your insults I've been mute,
 Did I your beauty e'er dispute?
 Green as an ivy you may be,
 Though not to be compared with me.
 If I'm admired as thus I'm seen,
 'Tis not because my dress is green:
 Know, then, I'm more admired than you,
 Because I'm green and fragrant too."

Most of her fables, like the above, turn on the ill effects of envy, or discontent at that situation in life in which it has pleased God to place us. All of them have a moral tendency; some are distinguished by acuteness and point, others by poetic imagery. Of the former class I here give you two examples.

THE ROSE-BUSH AND THE TRAVELLER.

Beside a lovely rose-bush gay,
That o'er a fountain grew,
A traveller stopp'd one summer's day,
Its elegance to view.

Young roses did the bush adorn,
And one he pluck'd with speed;
But with the rose he grasp'd a thorn,
Which made his fingers bleed.

With pain enraged, the traveller said,
" See how thou hast decoy'd me !
Pray why were not thy thorns display'd,
That travellers might avoid thee ? "

The bush replied, " Suspend rebuke,
I mean to be your tutor :
That you beneath the rose may look,
With caution for the future."

And mind, as through the world you pass,
What this event discloses —
I tell you, snakes are in the grass,
As thorns among the roses."

THE TWO FOXES.

Upon a spacious plain, one day,
 Two foxes met, as foxes may :
 " Behold !" cries one, " I've had good luck,
 To-day I've killed this well-fed duck."

Then straightway said, " How glad I feel,
 I've lived a life devoid of ill :
 From other foxes' faults I'm free ;
 No farmer e'er was robb'd by me."

The other cried, " Oh ! what a puff !
 I'm sadly vex'd to hear such stuff :
 Indeed, my friend, 'tis my belief,
 That every fox hath been a thief.

" It likes me not to hear such boast ;
 Those are not best, who brag the most :
 You know, like me, you 're ruled by pelf :
 Pray, did you rear that duck yourself?"

The next I am about to give, may, perhaps, be
 classed under the second head : it is called " The
 Eagle and the Toad," and originated from a cir-
 cumstance I have now to mention. Before I left

this place, on my late visit to London, whilst ill and confined to my room, Mary Colling came one evening to see me. She found me engaged in reading remarks in the "Quarterly Review," on the "Frogs" of Aristophanes. In the course of conversation, I alluded to the admirable translation of a portion of the Greek dramatist in the book before me; and observing that she took an interest in what I said about it, I put the work into her hand, and made her read to me the contest between Bacchus and the frogs. She entered into the spirit of it with true delight; and some lines — particularly those, —

" When the sun rides in glory, and makes a bright day,
'Mid lilies and plants of the water I stray;
Or, when the sky darkens, with tempest and rain,
I sink, like a pearl, in my watery domain;" —

she read twice, in order that she might, to use her own words, "Mind them;" *i. e.* retain them in her memory.

She then begged me to tell her who Aristophanes was, and appeared exceedingly curious to know why he made "frogs talk in a play." I read to her some passages from the Review, which formed the best answer to her questions; and she said, when I had concluded them, "that was

what she liked ; for she thought that to represent the mob of Athens under the figure of a parcel of croaking frogs, was in itself an excellent fable." She blushed, and added, " she had herself very often tried to do the same sort of thing ; for when people were ill-natured (and I must know how many ill-natured persons there were in a country town like this), she always felt hurt and angry, but she never let her feelings go beyond turning such persons and their enmity into a fable." Of this I shall give an instance or two before I close my letter. She then told me she would go home and borrow a hint from Aristophanes ; for as he had made frogs talk to Bacchus in a play, she would try and make a toad speak to an eagle in a fable ; and thus she did it : —

THE EAGLE AND THE TOAD.

Aurora had gilded the portals of day,
 And spangled with dew was the chaplet of May ;
 While birds in sweet chorus made vocal the sprays,
 Creation resounded with carols of praise.
 When, lo ! a bold eagle was mounted on high,
 And proudly pursued her blue path in the sky ;
 Out crawled a toad from a green marshy bed,
 And thus to the bird, it insultingly said : —

" Oh ! who but a fool such a gewgaw would be,
 'Twere better by far wert thou humble like me ;
 Pray, is not the earth good enough to abide in,
 That thou on the clouds of the sky must be riding ?"
 The eagle look'd down, while from anger exempt,
 And answer'd the toad in a strain of contempt :
 " Go, and talk to thy venomous race, not with me,
 I need no advice from a tadpole like thee.
 'Tis surely beneath me thine insults to chide,
 Whilst high on the sun-gilded clouds I can ride :
 Pray, what makes thee think I molested can be,
 By a poor insignificant crawler like thee ?"

I also add another fable by her of this class.

FLORA AND THE FLOWER.

The sun its rising radiance shed,
 When, lo ! in rich array,
 A new-blown flower its charms display'd,
 And look'd the queen of May.

While gentle zephyrs fann'd its head,
 And bowed its lovely form,
 It with a haughty look survey'd
 The victims of a storm.

Crown'd with the morning dew, it gazed
 On heaps of blasted flowers ;
 And, while despising them, it praised
 Its own superior powers.

But Flora heard, nor kept aloof ;
 She left her fragrant bed,
 And, mingling mildness with reproof,
 At once the Goddess said : —

“ While you those flowers inferior deem,
 Your judgment pride misrules ;
 For scoffing only is the theme
 Of inexperienced fools.

“ When thunders roar, and lightnings flame,
 And ruthless storms bear sway,
 Though now those stricken flowers you blame,
 You'll fall as well as they.

“ But valour shall no honour lose,
 Though quick you are to mock ;
 To heed your boast I'll not refuse,
 When you've withstood a shock.”

The next fable affords an excellent moral, on
 the gratitude and praise due to the Creator ; and,

I think, you will find it replete also with poetic feeling.

THE NETTLE AND THE SUNFLOWER.

As morn's bright smile array'd the sky
 In flowing robes of crimson dye,
 A sunflower turn'd its head, to pay
 A tribute to the king of day.
 A nettle which was nigh survey'd
 The homage that it daily paid ;
 By envy led, with accents rude,
 Derided thus its gratitude : —
 " Surely the sun must scorn thy wiles,
 He knows thou turn'st to court his smiles ;
 An orb of such superior power
 Needs not the homage of a flower !
 Yon poppy is as gay as thee,
 Although it's no such devotee ;
 I love such hypocrites to chide."
 When thus the grateful flower replied : —
 " I am convinced the king of day
 Needs not the homage that I pay ;
 His goodness I can ne'er requite,
 But gratitude inspires delight.
 I to the sun will homage show,
 My being to its beams I owe ;
 And gratitude for ever may
 Acknowledge, though it can't repay."

When Mary Colling wrote the following fable, one would think — though they are hardly applicable to persons in humble life — that, nevertheless, she had in view the well-known lines —

“ Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,
Yet touched and moved by ridicule alone; ”

inasmuch as she represented in it, with much playfulness, an actual occurrence, that had its rise in vanity and folly. Some servant girls had a holyday given them, that they might go in a party to see their friends at Plymouth. They left Tavistock in their natural character ; but on the road contrived to trick themselves out in some cast-off finery, and paraded Plymouth in the assumed rank of ladies ! They were met by a person who knew them, and who justly reproved their folly. Mary Colling heard the story, and it gave occasion to her fable of

THE TURKIES AND THE GANDER.

Three Turkies once, ambitious grown,
Went travelling where they were not known ;
And each, in hopes to be admired,
His tail with peacocks' plumes attired.

While thus their journey they pursued,
 Their borrow'd beauties oft they view'd ;
 But lo ! by chance, to their regret,
 They soon a neighbouring Gander met.
 The latter, although much surprised,
 His neighbours quickly recognised :
 " My friends," said he, " how strange the sight,
 Your tails are grown so fine since night ! "
 The Turkies each assumed an air :
 One said, " You don't know who we are ;
 And 'tis beneath us, when we wander,
 To claim acquaintance with a Gander."
 The Gander answer'd, " Though you're cross,
 And I am really at a loss
 What names to call you, now you roam,
 I'm sure you're Turkies when at home."

I have already mentioned, that Mary had complained to me of having suffered a good deal by the envy of certain persons in her own class of life ; and that it was her custom to give vent to her indignation by making such attacks the subject of her fables. I have remarked in her, that, like most persons endowed with acute feelings and a lively imagination, she is very sensitive in respect of an injury as well as a benefit. I have seen her cheek flushed, and her eyes sparkle, when she re-

lated to me many little instances of unprovoked malevolence. I have also seen them overflow with tears, when her heart has been full in grateful acknowledgment of any kindness that has been shown to her. There is in her no disguise of her real feelings ; whatever they may be, they are manifest.

However she may occasionally have indulged in this poetical mode of revenge, it has proceeded, I am satisfied, from no natural inclination to satire, or illiberal spirit of remark. These, indeed, are vices more frequently found in the higher than in the lower classes. In what is called refined or fashionable society, we too often observe a practised love of satire, a quick sense of the ludicrous, and but little perception of what is elevated in feeling, or great and noble in action. Every speck in the character of another is detected and ridiculed, whilst the real worth of the person thus censured is too frequently overlooked : just as he would do who forgot, that though a diamond might have flaws, it was still a precious stone.

Very different from this has been the motive that awakened any thing like a spirit of satire in poor Mary Colling ; nor has she, I believe, ever exercised it, but when provoked to do so by the malice of others. The following is an instance :—

Every country town, perhaps, can boast of certain gossips and busy-bodies, who are fond of employing their time in idle talk, and meddling with the affairs of their neighbours. Tavistock is not deficient in sundry persons of this description. One old woman, in particular, is very celebrated for this plague of the tongue. It appears she once managed to insinuate herself into the friendship, and in some degree to win the confidence, of Mary; and afterwards, without any cause of offence being given, very ill-naturedly said, "That for her part she thought Mary Colling knew so little of the world, and was so great a fool, she could get any thing out of her." Mary was fired with displeasure on hearing this, and gave vent to her feelings in the following lines; ending them with a fable, in which her false friend is characterised as the spaniel dog, "Craft," and herself under that of "Snap," the "inexperienced pup."

THE TWO SPANIELS.

ADDRESSED TO —.

Yes, traitor of my thoughtless youth !
 Fools and children speak the truth ;
 I'll bear, while truth is made your rule,
 Contentedly the name of fool.

I am a fool then; this is well:
 My friend, for once the truth you tell;
 And this is also true, of course,
 If fools are bad, that rogues are worse.
 You let your tongue go very free;
 You say you've power to injure me:
 Then why not do so? I am near, —
 Don't think I'm led a knave to fear.
 O, no! your malice I defy:
 A thousand times I'd rather die
 Than I'd lie fawning at your feet,
 Or act, like you, the hypocrite.
 You say you've power — then why not strike?
 Do what you can — soon as you like;
 And mind, my friend, I'll make you feel
 That I am flint, if you are steel.
 Revenge, say you, should be repress,
 That strong bad passion of the breast;
 But God, I'm sure, hath made no laws
 But that I may defend my cause.
 Now pause awhile, and speak with reason:
 Pray, did I ever tell you treason?
 If so, howe'er the world might chide it,
 I would not give you thanks to hide it.
 Your saintship says, that 'tis a merit
 To have a kind forgiving spirit;

But oft I've seen — Heaven knows 'tis true —
 Poor proofs thereof in such as you.
 Know, treacherous friend, I do detest
 To harbour hatred in my breast ;
 And e'er I choose another name,
 A fabled dog shall bear the blame.

Near Tavy's bank, one summer's day,
 Two spaniels met, as spaniels may;
 As to their names, mistakes may hap,
 But yet I think 'twas Craft and Snap.
 Said Craft to Snap, " You look quite well ;
 Pray, have you any news to tell ?
 Dear, bless my heart ! how you are grown !"
 " Yes," Snap replied, " more ways than one.
 Grown in experience, I have found
 The world with treachery doth abound ;
 For you I thought an honest dog,
 Before you proved yourself a rogue.
 You to my neighbours make a rule
 To call me silly easy fool ;
 To say you'd get me to impart
 To you the secrets of my heart ;
 That I, an inexperienced pup,
 Would easily become your dupe.
 Yes, — what you ask'd me to unfold,
 With honest ignorance I told :

And now you brag that you can harm me;
 But that, my friend, doth not alarm me.
 No more may puppies have to do
 With such deceitful dogs as you.
 What ! can your spite so long withhold ?
 Fulfil your boast — if young, I'm bold ;
 Though by deceit a knave's empower'd,
 If Snap's a fool he's not a coward."

The next little piece I here subjoin, was written on the following occasion : — Mary Colling has a sister named Anne, who seems, from all accounts, to be a kindred spirit with herself. " Sister Anne " one day went to Plymouth, and returning home, gave Mary so lively a description of having seen " the fine ships, floating all out at sea, in the beautiful moonlight," that Mary almost fancied she had witnessed the spectacle with her own eyes ; and composed the following lines before she retired to rest : —

MOON-LIGHT BY THE SEA-SHORE.

The queen of the night in full beauty advanced,
 And shed her bright light through the sky ;
 On the lap of the ocean her silver rays danced,
 And gilded the streamers on high.

An heart-cheering smile from her countenance
beam'd,

Which brighten'd the landscape around ;
The hills of the east with the night-dew were
gemm'd ;

Each beauty with mildness was crown'd.

Like breezes in May was the voice of the deep,
While danger reposed in her cell ;
No sounds met the ear but the course of the ship,
And the cheering acclaim of " All's well."

How alter'd the scene, when the proud sails must
bend,
As the high foaming billows arise ;
When the absolute powers of nature contend,
And navies are toss'd to the skies !

Appalling the scene, while the harsh thunder
raves,
And blackness the atmosphere shrouds ;
The breath of the tempest augments the mad
waves,
And mingles their foam with the clouds.

But the hero can bear all these heralds of woe,
Which the fair face of nature deform ;

Since Providence graciously deigns to bestow,
Alternately sunshine and storm.

To her sister she also addressed the following letter, referring, in a most lively and artless manner, to the sports of their childhood. This little piece would surely be as a gem in any collection of poems more peculiarly adapted to young persons : —

A LETTER TO MY SISTER ANNE

Dear Anne, I'm to my promise true,
I now sit down to write to you :
But as for news, I've none to tell,
It may suffice to say I'm well ;
But then, I think, it is not meet
To send an almost empty sheet.
To save my credit, I will try
To write of years that are gone by ;
When you and I did often stray,
On many a sunny summer's day.
What feast did we with farthings make !
How proud we were to give and take !
And in the meadows with what pride
We've gather'd flowers from Tavy's side ;

When I did range through brier and brake,
 That I the prettiest bunch might make !
 And oft, in many a rugged thorn,
 Our hands and aprons have we torn ;
 And then what projects did we try
 To hide the same from mother's eye !
 Sometimes beneath the trees we've sat,
 Reading of Whittington's famed cat ;
 Or talk'd till tears our eyes bedew'd,
 About the children in the wood.
 The schemes we form'd proved fancy bold :
 How often in our walks we've told
 What great things we would surely do,
 If we were tall like Fanny Drew !
 And don't you recollect at night
 Our neighbour John would, with delight,
 Sit by the fire, when 'twas our glory
 To hear him tell some goblin story ;
 Of rogues who lived at Roborough rock ;
 Of ghosts that walk'd at twelve o'clock ;
 How oft was seen on such a lawn,
 A coach with headless horses drawn ; *

* The goblin coach of a Lady Howard, who, according to a tradition of Tavistock, for some great but *unknown* crime, is obliged to ride in nightly penance, a "sheeted spectre," in a coach of bones, followed by her skeleton hound, from the gateway of Fitz-ford to Oakhampton Park.

Of hounds on Heathfield seen to rise,
 With horned heads and flaming eyes ;
 What wonders some old witch could do ?
 Nor did we doubt but all was true.
 And though these years are long gone by,
 As firm as e'er 's affection's tie ;
 For as to that I've little fear,
 Nor time nor change can it impair.
 My service, with respects, record
 To master and to mistress Ford ; *
 And pray do mind my dear canary,
 And then you'll please your sister Mary.

The canary alluded to in this letter was a curiosity in natural history ; as not only Mary Colling, but other persons who heard it, assure me it could talk : a peculiarity I mentioned in a former letter. The talking canary is since dead ; and I am much inclined to believe Mary killed it with kindness, by giving it pieces of cake and sweet things whenever it would call out to her, as it often did, " Give us a bit," or " Pretty bird," &c.

The next piece I am about to send is of a character different from all the rest. The circumstance which gave rise to it must not be passed in silence,

* A good lady in Tavistock who has been very kind to Mary.

more especially as it was related to me by Mary herself, with much feeling. One day, whilst she was busied in her household duties, a poor beggar woman came to the door with a boy in her arms, and told her tale of distress in so simple and affecting a manner, that Mary felt assured she spoke the truth, and gave her a trifle to relieve her wants. The poor woman's husband had been a soldier, and had fallen in action. The child she held in her arms was fatherless, the "widow's only son." After the beggar was gone from the door, Mary composed

THE SOLDIER'S ORPHAN.

Thy cheeks are brighten'd by a smile;
Sweet boy, 'tis but for a season,
For joy will fly, nor long beguile
Thy opening dawn of reason.

For one who fills a hero's grave
Thy cheeks of that smile shall rob,
When thy conscious breast for thy father brave
Shall be taught with sorrow to throb.

Still true British pride will some joy display;
A spark will be fired when the story

Is told, "How thy father fell on a day
Which exalted his country's glory."

With all the zeal which the brave e'er have shown,
His parting breath was suspended,
When he heard, with a feeling to cravens unknown,
That Britain's fierce strife was now ended.

The glorious news his labours crown'd,
'Midst danger's howling billow,
Where his broken spear, and the blood-stain'd
ground,
Composed his dying pillow.

But nought like fear could death impart;
Nor knew he a feeling of horror,
Till the babe he had left wrung a sigh from his
heart,
Whilst thou knewest nought of sorrow.

But thou to him shalt pay that sigh,
Though never appall'd by the story;
Thou shalt long like thy warrior father to die,
A pillar of England's glory.

The poems of this uneducated girl, when compared with those of your honest John Jones, seem

inferior to his in regard to polished versification, and exhibit less reading and knowledge than Mr. Jones had acquired even with his limited opportunities. Suffer me, however, to remark, and I do it with all deference to your superior judgment, that, in the conception of her subject, she appears by no means his inferior; and equally gifted with the essentials of poetry. To use your own words, she has “the eye, and the ear, and the feeling of a poet,” though in her — more than in Mr. Jones — “the art may be wanting;” but with her, in the bloom of youth and health, it is *not* “too late to acquire it.”

With such a mind as that of Mary Colling, regulated as it is by a deep sense of moral and religious duty, modest and humble, and not puffed up with any false notions of her own merit, there needs but the hand of culture to render it capable of bringing forth the best fruits: and when we consider how many of her little poems (as you will see in the volume) are consecrated to the praise of her Maker, we may fairly conclude that such culture would enlarge her powers of mind still more to honour Him, as some stars, even in “the brightness of their glory,” reflect the light of that sun, which is the source of their splendour.

I do not hesitate to say this to you, though I

am aware that, with many, such an assertion would expose me to censure and misapprehension — namely, that I was seeking to raise vain expectations and ideas in one, who had been better left unnoticed and unknown as I found her. Let me not, however, be mistaken. This is the age of education — the age of liberality: and when both are extended to the poor and lowly-born with prudence and discrimination, no one would more warmly advocate them than I would do, had I the means or the power to do so. The motives that have influenced me, as far as I was able, to encourage Mary Colling, and to bring her little pieces before yourself and the public, have arisen from no desire of vain glory for the poor girl; from none to encourage indiscriminately the humbler classes to emulate those placed by Providence in a higher situation than themselves; from no wish to create a restless ambition, or to remove her from that sphere (though I think her deserving of a better) in which she was born, and in which she is contented. And though — as no doubt must every member of a Christian community — I should rejoice to see realized the wish of that good king, and excellent man, George III., “that every one in his dominions might be able to read his Bible,” yet I am far from desiring that such

cultivation as I think Mary Colling worthy to receive, should become universal ; since it is much to be doubted if the end would produce those beneficial effects in proportion to the means employed to procure them. It is easy to scatter the seed ; but to collect a harvest from it requires good ground and much labour.

Education, beyond that of reading and writing, is, perhaps, not to be desired for the lower orders, taken in the aggregate. But when an individual of that class is gifted like Mary Colling — a thing of very rare occurrence — surely in such an instance liberality could never be better employed than in encouraging and fostering, by every means consistent with the active duties of her life, those good gifts, which hitherto she has shown no inclination to abuse. That she would do so hereafter, and, as the result of better information, become less wise, is an argument as absurd as it is unjustifiable. It would be like sitting in judgment on a man before he had committed a crime to call for it.

To encourage is not to flatter, no more than to foster is to render vain or self-sufficient. We all know that hope warms the heart, and honest praise stimulates endeavour ; whilst, on the contrary, early disappointment, or a cold look on the

first attempts of dawning talent, too often chills the most ardent mind, renders industry abortive, and not unfrequently leads to melancholy and discontent.

That Providence sometimes places minds of a higher order in apparently very disproportionate stations in life, is surely no reason that they should, therefore, be left to languish in neglect, in the shade of their humble fortunes. It is not our place to say wherefore this disproportion exists; but rather as brother to brother, on the same pilgrimage, bound to the same universal end — though one man travels on the summit and another in the vale — to extend, each to each, as far as we have the power, the kindly and helping offices of humanity and love. Were all things equal, the higher born could not exercise the many virtues of generous feeling and condescension, nor could the poor practise those of grateful acknowledgement, patience and contentment.

“God’s ways are not as our ways,” either in the moral or the physical world. We understand not that wisdom which delights to show itself even in its most lowly works. Let us not then hastily conclude that any one created being could have been better placed in society than he is, could we

have had the direction of his destiny. In mankind, the various orders and degrees of mind that constitute the distinguishing character of each individual, may be compared to those vegetable substances in nature, which require various soils and situations to render them healthful and flourishing, to answer the design of their Creator. Some will thrive best on the hard rock, or on the bleak unsheltered precipice, like those hardy Alpine plants, which, slender as they are, flourish amidst a thousand storms. Others are found best in the shade, whilst some burst into vigour and beauty only beneath the rays of a meridian sun.

The proportion of mind allotted to each, is governed by the same Almighty wisdom. It is the use made by man of his ability, and not the measure of it, that constitutes his merit; since we know, by the revealed word of Him who never utters other than truth, that condemnation will follow the abuse of "one talent," as well as of "ten." The obligation is the same, though the amount may differ; and strong is that obligation in stimulating us to a right employment of our intellectual endowments. The greatly gifted will have a great account to render, the meanest their proportion. If this is a duty on all, how doubly

is it such on those who give their thoughts and principles to the world at large ; who write for the public eye ; who send out life or death, like the winds that carry with them healthful gales or pestilent blasts, and know not how far the consequences of either may extend ! In this, as in all things else, we have an unerring guide, would we but follow it. The apostle's injunction is direct, " Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." No book, therefore, written on such principles, ought to be despised ; for though it may fail in excellence, it will not in honesty ; and God expects from no one more than he has given him power to perform. This consideration, far from being humiliating, is a source of constant satisfaction to the right minded, even if the least endowed : a limited capacity being felt no longer as such, when it is gratefully acknowledged as the allotted portion dispensed by the Giver of all good ; since God guides the smallest rivulet, for the purposes of general utility, as well as the most majestic waters.

Pardon this digression ; but it is not, I trust, altogether inapplicable to the subject. The humble individual, the efforts of whose infant muse you have so kindly received, having, in every instance,

regulated them by the dictates of moral and religious feeling, her talent has not been idly spent, nor uselessly laid up. That she may by her future, as she does by her present conduct, endeavour to deserve your kindness, is my sincere wish; nor do I think she is likely to abuse it: and, I trust, no success (should success be hers) will ever make her forget one great truth — that, independent of a higher consideration, the lasting influence of, and respect paid to every woman in society, depends not on her talents, but on her principles, in every period and in every station of her life.

For the part I have taken in bringing out her little volume, I trust there needs no other apology than what I have already offered, since a wish to render her service, if possible to better her humble fortunes, and to cheer and assist her honest endeavours, has alone prompted me to the task. Nor can I conclude without quoting, in reference to my notice of poor Mary Colling, when both herself and her verses first became known to me — even at the risk of being considered presumptuous — a passage I met with not long since in a periodical work, and which you possibly may have seen, “ Let us ever act so as to promote the welfare of

those amongst whom we may chance to be thrown,
and we may sometimes have the satisfaction to
find that we have entertained angels unawares."

I have the honour to remain,

My dear Sir,

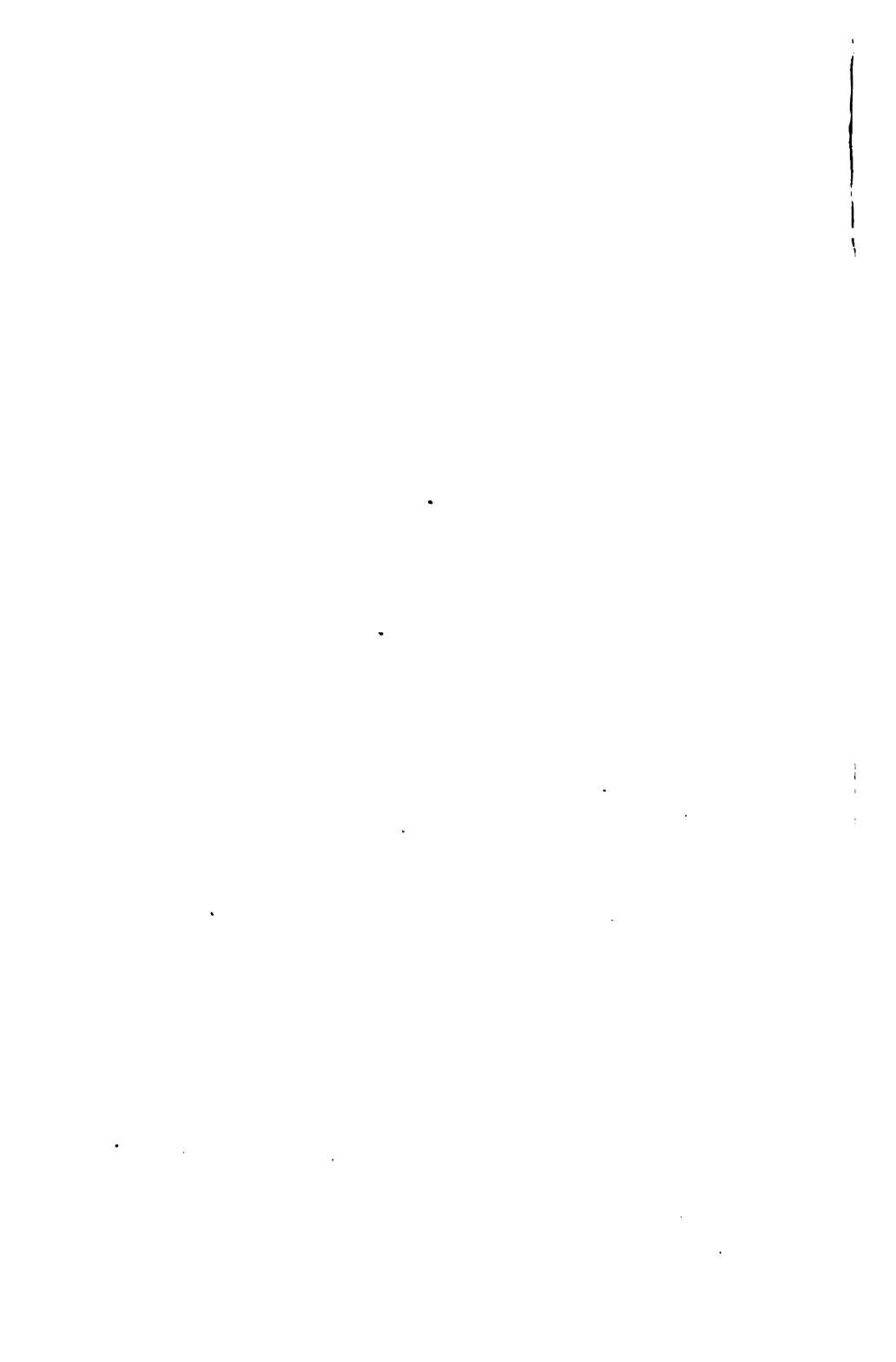
Very truly and faithfully yours,

ANNA E. BRAY.

P. S. — Since writing the above, I have received from Mary Colling a copy of verses addressed to yourself, called "The Poet and the Flower." They were written on the following occasion: — In reply to a question of mine respecting botany, you lately said, "Entomology would interest me more than botany, were it not for killing the insects, which I could not bear to do. *I do not even like to gather flowers.*" I mentioned the circumstance to Mary, and told her that as her thoughts were so often turned on flowers, it might afford her a subject for a poem. The lines which I send with this, in her own hand-writing, are the result of that conversation.



FABLES.



THE POET AND THE FLOWER.

WRITTEN ON HEARING FROM MRS. BRAY THAT MR. SOUTHEY
DID NOT LIKE TO PLUCK FLOWERS.

WHILE Nature wore her vernal wreath,
And violets pour'd their fragrant breath,
Through Flora's bowers a poet stray'd,
To mark the hues her tribes display'd.
His heart of goodness was possess'd,
And Mercy was his bosom's guest ;
Her dictates all his actions moved,
And even flowers his kindness proved ;
Nor would he pluck them from the spray,
To cause a premature decay.
A Rose, with pearly dew-drops crown'd,
Was nodding to the gales around ;
And thus, while balmy sweets she shed,
Bow'd to the Muse's child, and said,
" Since Mercy thus displays her powers,
And you show kindness e'en to flowers,
Around your path may Zephyr fling
Our grateful fragrance from his wing !

Pity we claim ; short is our stay ;
We soon our debt to Nature pay :
And well 'tis known our lovely forms
Fall victims oft to showers and storms ;
But we may boast, our rich array
Doth the Creator's power display.
Creation's breast we deck with blooms,
And scent the air with sweet perfumes ;
But since decay will soon assail
Our charms, and prove they still are frail,
Poets may learn from us to chide
The boast of vanity and pride.

THE OX AND THE ASS.

An Ox and near an Ass one day
Were in a meadow feeding ;
Thus to the Ox the Ass did say,
Nor sense nor manners heeding:

“ Here tame like thee I would not stay ;
No labour would I do ;
I'd fight and far away I'd stray,
If I had horns like you.”

The Ox replied, “ That's well confess'd —
No doubt you would abuse them :
But I, who am of horns possess'd,
Know better how to use them.”

THE FLOWER AND THE WILLOW.

A lovely flower, of rainbow hue,
Beneath a weeping willow grew ;
But discontent proved its vexation ;
It murmur'd at its situation.

While passion shook its blushing head,
It to the weeping willow said :
“ See how I'm shaded here by you :
My lovely charms are hid from view :

“ Beauties like mine would surely grace
An open and conspicuous place.
Why in this lonely shade must I
Unnoticed bloom, unnoticed die ?

“ To hide such charms is 'gainst all rule ;
And Flora surely was a fool,
To plant so fair a flower as me
Beneath a gloomy willow tree.”

The goddess, from her fragrant bower,
O'erheard the discontented flower ;

And, straightway, she its wishes granted ;
 'Twas to another spot transplanted.

Beneath the sun's resplendent ray,
 Its charms were wither'd in a day.
 The willow, that had been its aid,
 Surveyed the change, and thus she said : —

“ Frail murmurer ! well may'st thou lament
 The fatal fruits of discontent ;
 For since my shelter was despised,
 See how thy folly is chastised !

“ Why did thy pride create a care
 That all who pass'd might deem thee fair ?
 But thou hast proved, to thy vexation,
 How dear fools pay for admiration.

“ To Flora's tribes, I hope thy fall
 Will prove a good, and teach them all
 To live contented in their stations,
 Nor murmur at her dispensations.”

The faded flower made no reply,
 But, trembling to the zephyr's sigh,
 Bow'd down its languid head, and died
 The victim of its foolish pride.

THE HARE AND THE HOUND.

A country-man, one day, with care,
 Did till * a trap to catch a Hare ;
 But Puss escaped the snare thus laid,
 For, lo ! therein a Hound was stay'd.
 The Hound began a hideous yell,
 Which echoed over hill and dell ;
 When, lo ! a Hare pass'd by, and view'd
 The Hound by whom she'd been pursued.
 Poor Puss, though glad, was much surprised :
 She by the Hound was recognised :
 " Ah ! Puss, my dearest friend," said he,
 " Do lend your aid to set me free ;
 And if you will, my word I'll stake
 Ne'er more a Hare to kill or take."
 The Hare replied : — " That's flattering stuff !
 You have already kill'd enough ;
 Methinks, although you promise fair,
 I am more safe while you are there.
 'Tis wrong to stray from caution's bounds :
 And hard to trust to hungry Hounds."

* Set.

THE SNOW-DROP AND THE IVY.

Fast fell the rain, the winds did roar ;
Her wint'ry robe Creation wore ;
When, fearless, from a frost-bound bed,
A Snow-drop raised its little head.

An Ivy, through the winter green,
Its unprotected state had seen ;
And, by mistaken prudence moved,
The fearless flow'ret thus reproved : —

“ 'Tis great presumption this, I vow,
In such a tender flower as thou,
That thus thou seem'st to dare the blast,
When lofty elms e'en are laid waste.

“ Take my advice, lie by awhile,
Till Sol resumes his vernal smile ;
Then beauty will bedeck the vales,
And whirlwinds sink to gentle gales.

“ Let not the storms display their power
On such a weak, unshelter'd flower.”

So prudence may presumption chide :
But thus the fearless flower replied : —

“ I know not what my fate may be.
You shall not raise distrust in me.
Learn, this suggestion makes me bold :
‘ The hand which form’d can well uphold.’

“ Why I am here — I give the reason —
I come at my appointed season ;
And though I am but weak and small,
I ’ll never shrink from Nature’s call.”

THE REDBREAST AND THE CUCKOO.

Deeply engaged in friendly chat,
One lovely morn in May,
A Redbreast and a Cuckoo sat
Upon a blooming spray.

Well pleased awhile did both remain;
Each trimm'd its dewy breast;
But soon the Cuckoo changed its strain,
And Robin thus address'd : —

“ Pray, don't suppose we're on a par;
For that would never do;
Think what you please, but I am far
More famed a bird than you.

“ My notes, you know, are much esteem'd;
Delight I always bring:
I'm heard with pleasure, for I'm deem'd
A herald of the spring.”

The Redbreast heard, and thus replied:
“ You are too rash, my friend;

I'll not your charming powers deride,
But will my own defend.

" I own your note proclaims the spring;
But I'm as good as you;
Not only then I sweetly sing,
But in cold winter too.

" I've cheer'd creation with my lay,
When snow was on the ground;
And solaced oft the leafless spray,
While ruthless storms have frown'd.

" 'Tis spring alone your note beguiles,
When bloom the woodland crowns;
But I am heard when Nature smiles,
And likewise when she frowns."

THE MONKIES AND THE APES.

A group of Monkies and two Apes
Had spent the day in gathering grapes;
At eve, beneath an oak they sat,
And pass'd some hours in friendly chat;
When lo ! in course of conversation,
The Apes both made an observation,
That 't would be right some grapes to spare,
And for cold winter's wants prepare.
We've got a cave, said they, you know,
Where you may all your hoards bestow;
And on our word you may rely;
Fear not our honesty to try.
The Monkies, one and all, combined
To thank them for their offer kind;
And brought, without delay, their grapes
To these supposed kind-hearted Apes.
But when cold winter frowns, behold
The Monkies shivering with the cold:
All sought the Apes their grapes to gain,
Not thinking all their toil was vain.
At last, with many a surly flout,
The consequential cheats walk'd out,

And thus address'd the clamorous crew :
Pray, what's the cause of this ado ?
Tease us no more about your grapes :
We are not worse than other Apes :
And to obtain, and ne'er repay,
Is quite the fashion of the day.

THE TULIP AND THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

Screen'd from the sultry heats of day,
 Beneath its shade a Lily lay :
 A gaudy Tulip near its side
 Had raised its head with stately pride.

The Tulip, bath'd in morning dew,
 And bright with tints of rainbow hue,
 Seem'd anxious to extol its power,
 And thus address'd the modest flower : —

“ See, here I stand in rich array,
 And bask in all the smiles of day,
 Surrounded by the tribes of spring,
 And fann'd by Zephyr's balmy wing.

“ Compar'd with you, I am so tall,
 I'm sure I'm more admired by all ;
 While 'neath yon shade you shrink embower'd
 Like a poor timid skulking coward.”

The Lily from its shade replied —
“ Thine insults I will meekly chide;
For so unjust I would not seem,
Thine ignorance a crime to deem.

“ Tulips, indeed, are gaudy flowers,
But Lilies boast superior powers;
And Flora thought it was her duty
To give some fragrance, others beauty.

“ And though you feast on admiration,
I envy not your situation;
My fate needs not to be lamented —
I live beneath my shade contented.”

THE HOUND AND THE HOUSE-DOG.

While prowling o'er his master's ground,
A brave old House-dog met a Hound,
Whose angry looks his spleen express'd,
While honest Tray he thus address'd : —

“ How dare you stray beyond your bounds ?
Are House-dogs proper guests for Hounds ?
No sport with you your master shares —
You never grace his board with hares.

“ To have you hang'd would show his sense ;
Your fare I'm sure's no small expense ;
Things are no better for your keeping,
For scores of times I've caught you sleeping.”

Old Tray replied — “ That may be true ;
I sleep sometimes — and pray don't you ?
But thus can I my keep requite,
Whene'er required I bark and bite.

“ I am not moved by your abuse ;
Though not a Hound, I have my use :
Begone ! and mind your own affairs ;
I keep off rogues if you catch hares.”

THE OAK AND THE IVY.

An Ivy round an Oak was twined,
And deem'd its long acquaintance kind ;
Until, one morn, a sturdy clown
Dragg'd the intruding creeper down.
While useless on the ground 'twas laid,
Thus to the sturdy Oak it said : —
“ Is this the way that I'm discarded ?
And is my friendship thus rewarded ?
Though now thou art with beauty crown'd,
Dost thou forget when winter frown'd,
When all thy beauties low were laid,
I then thy trunk with leaves array'd ? ”
The Oak replied, — “ Suspend thy boast —
Thy distance was desired most :
To me thy friendship do not plead ;
No artificial robes I need.
Hence ! to yon pile where ruin prowls,
And form a bower for midnight owls !
For I would rather cease to be,
Than owe support to such as thee.”

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE FROG.

The scene was all lovely, while stars dazzling
bright,

Encircled the throne of the fair queen of night;
Through heaven's high azure majestic she rode,
And splendour beam'd forth from her glorious
abode;

When, lo! in a valley illumed by her rays,
A Nightingale chanted her deep thrilling lays.
While 'neath fragrant blossoms the warbler was
hid,

She thus by a Frog was insultingly chid: —

“ I wish some where else you your vigils would
keep;

For I by your voice am prevented from sleep;
Since all other warblers their vespers have ended,
A Nightingale's song might as well be suspended.”
The bird thus replied: — “ Get and hide in your
bog —

Mine ear is annoy'd at the voice of a Frog;
For know, I'm convinced, though to you 'tis pro-
voking,

My singing is surely as good as your croaking.”

VENUS, MINERVA, AND THE GLOW- WORM.

Around was every blooming spray
Gemm'd with the joyful tears of May;
All was serene, while Glow-worms shone,
Bespangling o'er a verdant lawn.

Their beauty and their nightly pride,
The flaming eye of Venus spied;
Through all restraint her anger broke,
And thus the offended goddess spoke : —

“ That such mere earth-born things aspire
To emulate our heavenly fire,
Know, much offends the shining throng,
Whose charms inspired the ancients' song.”

Minerva rose; her peaceful throne
Was silver'd by the rising moon;
This breach of concord to repair,
Thus mildly spoke the heaven-born fair : —

“ What makes fair Venus thus repine ?
Is she less bright when Glow-worms shine ?
Can orbs which in such grandeur blaze
Be led to envy Glow-worms’ rays ?

Oh ! think how high your course, and deem
Such things unworthy of your theme ;
More generous strains become you well,
For Envy’s is the voice of hell.

Though she on earth her foul head rears,
Discard her from the shining spheres ;
Nor dare insult your Author, who
Made Glow-worms shine as well as you.”

THE GOAT, THE MONKEY, THE FOX, AND THE OWL.

A Goat, a Monkey, and a Fox,
Resided once upon some rocks ;
And what the world may friendship call
Existed long between them all.

Until it fell upon a day
That, lo ! there was the deuce to pay ;
One with another they fell out,
And each began to brawl and flout.

The Monkey did no anger lack,
His two companions to attack ;
He in a passion raised his head,
As unto Reynard thus he said : —

“ You are a false dissembling rogue !
You ever sneak, lie, and collogue * ;
Turn out, you thief, there from your hole,
Those fine fat turkies which you stole ! ”

* “ To flatter,” &c. Vide Johnson’s Dictionary,—a word commonly used in Devonshire.

The Fox replied — “ Your charge is true ;
 But still I am not worse than you :
 You need not give yourself such airs —
 If I stole turkies, you stole pears ! ”

The Goat said — “ Both are in the wrong,
 And each had better hold his tongue ;
 For, were your actions brought to test,
 Soon 't would be proved that bad 's the best.”

“ Hold ! ” cries the Monkey, “ master Shag !
 I 'm sure you have no room to brag ;
 You know, 't was but the other day
 You stole some oats from farmer May.”

An Owl, that yet had silence kept,
 Peep'd from the ivy where she slept ;
 And, with a magisterial look,
 She checked them thus, with stern rebuke : —

“ My friends,” she said, “ from what has past,
 Learn to be careful how you cast,
 At a near neighbour's house, a stone,
 When glass it is that forms your own.”

THE JESSAMINE AND THE IVY.

From the dark north, in fury's form,
With thunders girded march'd the storm;
The skies were veiled with awful glooms,
And Flora's tribes conceal'd their blooms :
The sun withdrew his shining rays,
And birds sat mute upon the sprays,
When, lo ! an Ivy, unbenign,
Insulted thus a Jessamine :
" The approaching storm, know, thou must dread ;
'Twill surely blast thy flower-crown'd head :
Soon shall I see thy beauties driven,
Like chaff, before the winds of heaven.
Oh ! how can flatterers' tongues incline
To praise such short-lived buds as thine !
I'm always here, in green attired,
And yet I never am admired.
But now prepare to lose thy wreath ;
The whirlwind's desolating breath
Will surely humble all thy pride."
When thus the Jessamine replied :
" Poor envious thing ! although my fate
With joy thou dost anticipate,

I'm not inclined to turn a brawler,
With a malicious, bloomless crawler :
Nor yet alarm'd, although I know
The winds may lay my beauties low.
If from my head my crown they sever,
My root will be as firm as ever ;
So at my fate I'll not repine,
But to the earth my crown resign,
In hopes, when summer decks the plain,
That I my beauties may regain.
I know thine envy hath been fired,
Because I am so much admired :
For always those of worth devoid
At Merit's praise will be annoy'd."

THE SNAKE AND THE LARK.

Up rose the sun, when, from a brake,
One morn, crept out a black old Snake ;
Just as a Lark had left the spray,
And hail'd with songs the new-born day.

But, whilst on high the warbler soar'd,
The reptile heard the strain she pour'd,
When to the sky it rais'd its head,
And thus, with spiteful hisses, said :

“ Oh ! how I hate such bawling things !
Had I the power, I'd clip thy wings ;
Such lofty flights thou should'st not take,
The silence of the morn to break.

“ Bound to the earth I here must lie,
For neither song nor wings have I,
While thou look'st down, with scornful pride.”
Thus then the cheerful Lark replied :

“ You're welcome to deride my lays ;
From such as you I seek no praise :

To earth confined, there you must crawl,
And hiss, and wish — and that is all :

For no such low and creeping things
Will e'er have power to crop my wings;
And surely 't is no more amiss
For Larks to sing, than Snakes to hiss."

THE ROSE-BUSH AND THE BRAMBLE.

A Rose-bush once, of blushing hue,
 Beside a rugged Bramble grew :
 This rough companion of her side
 She thus addressed, in beauty's pride ;
 " How great must your presumption be
 To venture here, so nigh to me !
 See, with what graces I'm attired :
 My form was made to be admired :
 But you hold out no charms to view ;
 There's no such honour paid to you.
 The contrast's great, you must suppose,
 Between a Bramble and a Rose ;
 While folks admire my beauties rare,
 Your rugged thorns they shun with care.
 In me what passing elegance,
 To charm the eye and please the sense !
 The Muse to me this fame ascribes,
 ' The fairest queen of Flora's tribes.'
 The Rose is such a favourite flower,
 'Tis made to grace the princely bower :
 How oft's its loveliness display'd,
 Decking the brow of courtly maid ! "

The Bramble, fired with rage, replied :
 " Peace ! be not thus puff'd up with pride ;
 Applaud your beauty if you please,
 But keep from insults, such as these.
 You know not what you talk about,
 Because you only look without ;
 But search beneath your bosom fair,
 And you'll find imperfections there.
 That I am rugged, may be said ;
 To me no admiration's paid :
 But yet, my friend, can you deny,
 That you have thorns as well as I ?
 Easy it is for you to prate ;
 To toss your head in pomp and state ;
 While you yourself perfection deem,
 And make another's faults your theme.
 But, sure, your boasting is too much :
 On things like these you should not touch ;
 Because you know you must decay ;
 Your charms are fleeting as the day.
 For should this hour a tempest frown,
 How quick 'twould sweep your beauty down !
 Pray think on this, how soon you'll lie
 No less obscure and bare than I."

THE MOON AND THE CLOUD.

Full-orb'd in her splendour the Moon rose on high,
 And shed her pure light o'er the blue-vaulted sky,
 While mountains, and vallies, and woodlands, and
 streams,

Were glowing with beauty beneath her fair beams.
 But soon the bright orb by a Cloud was o'erspread,
 Which sullied the lustre she kindly had shed :
 While blackness it gather'd, and, prompted by spite,
 Thus it sternly address'd the mild Queen of the
 night :

“ How vain is the praise which thy radiance be-
 guiles !

Though mountains and vallies are cheered by thy
 smiles,

Of thyself well thou know'st thou no beauty
 could'st render,

To the Sun thou'rt indebted for all thy famed
 splendour.”

The Moon thus replied, while more lovely she
 shone,

And scatter'd the darkness which veil'd her bright
 throne :

“ Though thou may'st despise it, with joy I confess
That I owe to the Sun all the light I possess ;
While cheer'd and adorn'd by his splendour benign,
In my course, as a spark of his glory, I shine,
And deem it an honour a debtor to be
To an orb that's so great and so glorious as he.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A lean hungry Mouse, while in quest of its food,
 On the haunts of a Lion by chance did intrude :
 The Lion his greatness with clemency blended,
 And the poor little thing he benignly befriended.
 In ease and in plenty thus lived the poor Mouse,
 On the stores that the Lion still brought to his house,
 And frolick'd about ; but, alas ! in the end,
 It forgot the respect which was due to its friend ;
 And once, while the Lion was taking repose,
 Behold, it presumed e'en to crawl on his nose.
 Enraged was the Lion ; indeed, 'twas no wonder ;
 And thus he exclaim'd, while his voice was like
 thunder :

“ Though kindness induced me to pity thy lot,
 That I am a Lion must not be forgot ;
 Of late thine assurance to me hath been hateful ;
 My favours have made thee presumptuous, not
 grateful.

But dear shalt thou pay for thine insolent mirth !”
 And behold the poor pigmy was crush'd to the
 earth.

And hence may its fate be a check to all rudeness,
 To those who with impudence thus requite good-
 ness.

THE LIBURNUM AND THE BAY-TREE.

With crimson clouds the east was drest ;
 The joyful lark had left her nest ;
 When thus did a Liburnum chide,
 A Bay-tree that was near its side :
 " See with what beauty I'm array'd !
 What golden tresses crown my head !
 I deem it a disgrace to be
 Beside a bloomless thing like thee.
 Now in the vernal season's reign,
 Amidst creation's smiling train,
 I'd not be seen in such array."
 But thus replied the hardy Bay :
 " So much puff'd up thou need'st not be,
 Thy weakness well is known to me ;
 Though now full bloom'd thou dost appear,
 Thy fading time, my friend, is near.
 And though no flowers on me are seen,
 I'm always drest in cheerful green ;
 The blasts of winter I've defied,
 While gaudy shrubs have droop'd and died."
 May not a Bay-tree be design'd
 To represent the virtuous mind ;
 Which still through every change secure,
 Nor frowns depress, nor smiles allure ?

THE PEACOCK AND THE OYSTER.

Beneath a cliff, one summer's day,
A gaudy Peacock took his way ;
While strutting there, with thoughtless pride,
An Oyster on the sand he spied.

He view'd it long with cold disdain ;
Then said, in a contemptuous strain :
" Sure pity's due to thy hard lot ;
Thou look'st like one by Heaven forgot.

" Lo ! here exposed, in this sad place,
No beauty thine, nor sense, nor grace ;
Such a vile, rough-hewn thing beside,
How could my graces be denied ? "

The Oyster heard this swell of pride ;
Her shell she op'd, and thus replied :
" If by your words your sense you rule,
Permit me, sir, to call you fool.

" Perhaps things are as you denote ;
I own the roughness of my coat :

But that to me yields no vexation ;
It best befits my situation.

“ And now, with grateful pride, I tell,
A lamp of pearl illumines my shell :
Thus then enlighten'd, thus protected,
How can I be by Heaven neglected ?

“ And, here, let all contention end :
Learn well this truth, my strutting friend :
‘ For what they’ve not, the wise ne’er grieve ;
‘ And what Heaven gives, with thanks receive.’ ”

THE FADED ROSE, THE POPPY,
AND THE BEE.

A Rose a blast had just sustain'd,
But by the fragrance it retain'd,
It soon a labouring bee allured,
Who from its sweets a feast procured.
A Poppy which beside it grew,
Array'd in tints of rainbow hue,
Blush'd deep with rage, and straightway she
Sternly addressed the humming bee : —
“ While here I bloom, in full perfection,
Pray, what's the cause of this rejection ?
How much annoy'd am I to see
A faded Rose preferr'd to me ! ”
The Bee replied : — “ If thou would'st know
Why to the Rose such love I show ;
It is because its fragrant power
Survives frail Beauty's transient hour.
And though, alas ! the ruthless storm
Hath prey'd upon its blushing form :
A power to please it doth possess,
Superior to thy gaudy dress.
So thus, my friend, it soon appears,
Beauty may please, but worth endears :
Then be no more surprised to see
A faded Rose preferr'd to thee.”

THE JACKAL AND THE APE.

A trusty Jackal, on a bright summer's morn,
 Was roving in quest of some food :
 And long had it stray'd through the forest forlorn,
 When an Ape on its haunts did intrude.

The Ape's approbation these words then express'd : —

“ How well you obey duty's call !
 I think that the Lion must surely be blest
 Who has such a faithful Jackal.

“ But take my advice, and this drudgery leave,
 And your merit rewarded shall be ;
 From all your hard labours you may have reprieve,
 If you now will be subject to me.”

But thus replied Jack : — “ Vain the bribes you
 • • may try ;
 I loathe both your temper and shape :
 I'm sure with a Lion I rather would die,
 Then live the Jackal of an Ape.”

THE OAK AND THE POPLAR.

There was an Oak, which long had stood,
 The pride and monarch of the wood ;
 None doubted but its giant form
 Would have repell'd rude Envy's storm.
 A meagre Poplar grew beside,
 Of sense devoid, though not of pride;
 To merit no regard it paid,
 But to the sturdy Oak it said : —
 " Look, friend, and see how slim am I !
 With this slight trunk what tree can vie ?
 How greatly 't would excite my passion
 If I, like you, were out of fashion !
 Oh ! had I power, with one stout blow
 I'd lay such proud encumberers low."
 Such insults well might rage provoke ;
 Thus then replied the angry Oak : —
 " That I've no charms, it may be true,
 To please such paltry twigs as you ;
 What of my trunk thy thoughts may be,
 Excites no care nor fear in me ;
 But, surely, that some honour craves,
 Whereby Britannia rules the waves.

Can Poplars help to guard her shores ?
Defend her rights, and bring her stores ?
Or bear her thunders round the world,
When War's dread banners are unfurl'd ?
Poplars, to view, may be admired ;
But substance is at times required :
Were Oaks all paltry twigs like you,
Pray, what would Neptune's heroes do ?
To give advice is now my duty :
Go somewhere else to boast thy beauty :
And hence take heed how you provoke
A brave old sturdy English Oak.
What could thy praise on me bestow ?
That I have merits well I know :
Thou hast no wit to comprehend them ;
And too much envy to commend them."

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

The moon, full orb'd, with beauteous light,
Sat smiling on the brow of night ;
And brightly shone her lovely beams,
On hills, and dales, and rocks, and streams ;
When, in a wood, a Nightingale
Began to chant her plaintive tale :
The minstrel thought herself alone,
Till interrupted by a moan.
She ceased her song, and turn'd her eye,
And quickly spied an Owl hard by ;
With angry looks, then, she address'd
This harmless, but unwelcome, guest : —
“ Intruder ! from this wood begone !
That I may pour my notes alone ;
Or cease your song at my desire :
Who can such hideous cries admire ?
Indeed, your note mine ear annoys —
I beg you'll cease that horrid noise.”
The Owl replied : — “ That I'll not do ;
Sure I may sing as well as you !
Ears may be found, to hear the tales
Of Owls, as well as Nightingales.”

THE MONKEY AND THE ASS.

One eve, just as the sun was set,
 A labouring Ass a Monkey met,
 Who thought it would high rank denote
 That he had on a spangled coat.
 Sternly he thus address'd the Ass : —
 “ Is this the way by me you pass ?
 You should have made your bow, at least,
 You stupid and ill-manner'd beast !
 Indeed, 'twas but the other day
 Yon surly dog, whose name is Tray,
 Pass'd by me with the same neglect,
 And never show'd the least respect.
 Though in a spangled coat array'd,
 Homage to me by none is paid :
 Surely it puts me in a rage
 To see the manners of the age.”
 The Ass just paused ; then answer'd thus : —
 “ My friend, you make a mighty fuss :
 Before this hour, I never knew
 That honour was a monkey's due.
 What obligation am I under
 To pay respect to you, I wonder ?

Is't 'cause you wear a coat outside
Which covers o'er your natural hide?
Indeed, my friend, you are, I vow,
The last to whom I'd scrape or bow;
For though I'm but a labouring donkey,
That's better than a tawdry monkey."

THE FOX AND THE COW.

A tailless Fox and brindled Cow
 Were standing near a barley-mow :
 When, lo ! a dog pass'd o'er the plain,
 Which straightway roused a slanderous strain.
 Thus said the Fox : — " 'Tis my belief,
 Yon sheep-dog is a crafty thief;
 But well his plunder he conceals :
 No doubt, a lamb he often steals :
 He surely lives upon the best :
 He looks more fat than all the rest."
 " Peace ! hold your tongue," replied the Cow ;
 " I hate such slanderous hints, I vow :
 Think what you please, but your belief
 Will not confirm the dog a thief.
 You'd have him thought a pilfering elf,
 Because you are a thief yourself :
 You have no proofs you can reveal ;
 And if that dog a lamb *did* steal,
 There's something in your hole will tell,
 That you like thieving just as well.
 Well all the neighbours knew, last Lent,
 Which way Dame Durdon's turkeys went ;
 You can't conceal that, to your cost,
 Just at that time your tail you lost."

THE VIOLET AND THE TULIP.

A Violet, near a Tulip's side,
Once in a garden bloom'd ;
The Tulip, with insulting pride,
A lofty height assumed :

As if to admiration's view
It would its charms display ;
While, 'neath a shade bedropt with dew,
The fragrant Violet lay.

But, lo ! at last a ruthless storm
O'er heaven began to lower ;
And soon the Tulip's gaudy form
Was crush'd beneath its power.

While to the earth it droop'd its head,
With all its charms consumed,
Content beneath its peaceful shade,
The humble Violet bloom'd.

THE FAIRY AND THE ROSE.

The blushes of spring did creation adorn,
And the lark sang her lay 'mid the freshness of
morn;

When, lo! in a valley a Rose sweetly bloom'd,
Whose fragrance the dawn's rising breezes per-
fumed.

A frolicsome Fairy was tripping that way,
And gazed with delight on its beauteous array;
A wish she express'd, that the flower should be torn
From the stalk where it blossom'd, her breast to
adorn.

While her hand stretching forward, to pluck it she
aim'd,

"Oh! forbear, gentle Fairy," the flow'ret exclaim'd;

"For if you are just, you will surely confess,
That the stalk which brought forth hath a right
to possess.

With what pangs of reluctance, being pluck'd, I
should leave her!

And, oh! could I sigh, my last sigh would I give
her;

The tears which the morning has dropp'd on my
head,
O'er her leaves, at our parting, with anguish I'd
shed.

Display your compassion: Oh! here let me stay,
To bloom on her headtill my time of decay;
And when all my beauties with summer are fled,
On her roots may my blossoms rest wither'd and
dead!

Soon, soon will the time of my fading arrive;
But fain would affection the short date survive:
And who can to nature this fond claim deny,
A wish e'en in death near our loved ones to lie."

MISCELLANEOUS.



THE ROTTEN STICK.

My friend, beware ! don't lean thereon ;
A rotten stick's no stay :
It will not break, if left alone ;
But, if you lean, it may.

And, while I speak, a thought doth strike
My mind, which seems to say,
How much a rotten stick is like
The friendships of the day.

Be cautious how you trust a friend,
For friendship's weak at best ;
If all were true who do pretend,
How would the world be blest !

For many look like friends indeed :
All's well, while left alone ;
But when you come their help to need,
Behold, their friendship's gone !

There's a sure way to shun this ill —
On no one to depend ;
To all the world maintain good will :
But make *yourself* your friend.

THE BAY-TREE.

When wintry winds tempestuous blow,
And hills and dales are clad with snow;
The hardy bay-tree may be seen,
Array'd in leaves of cheerful green.

When blooming flowers forsake the plains,
Its constant aspect it maintains;
For every blast is bravely borne,
And Nature's frown it seems to scorn.

This, as an emblem, we may place
Of him who runs the Christian race:
Though sorrow may his path attend,
He, like the bay-tree, scorns to bend.

No dire alarms can him dismay:
The champion boldly treads his way:
Though dangers threat, he knows no fear,
Conscious his God is always near.

Like stormy winds, distress may blow,
And envy plot his overthrow :
Undaunted still he bears the shock ;
He stands on an almighty rock.

Calmly he doth resign his breath,
Conscious the frozen hand of death
Will only instrumental prove,
To raise his soul to realms above :

Where now, secure from every blast,
And every threatening danger past,
His virtues there fear no decay,
But bloom through an eternal day.

THE PET-LAMB.

A SONG.

ROSA.

Oh ! Damon, from yon flowery glade,
 This morn my little favourite stray'd ;
 And it, I fear, I ne'er shall find :
 I've wept till I am almost blind.

So sweet a creature ne'er was led ;
 White as the snow's it's fleecy head ;
 And gentle as the turtle-dove :
 I know not how it came to rove.

DAMON.

My Rosa, do not weep ; for, lo !
 I saw a lamb an hour ago :
 The little wanderer I pursued,
 And caught it near yon shining flood.

It lick'd my hand, I smooth'd its head,
 " 'Tis surely Rosa's lamb," I said :
 I sought your fold, with joyful care,
 And bore the pretty vagrant there.

MAY-DAY.

A VILLAGE DIALOGUE.

PHILLIS.

See, Roger ! there's a fine blue sky :
I hope it will continue dry ;
Then all our village will be gay :
To-morrow is the first of May.

Oh, what delights we then shall see,
When all are full of mirth and glee !
I wonder if the May-pole's made —
Two groats tow'rds it my dame has paid.

ROGER.

I've been to stroll with Larry West ;
Both he and I have seen it drest :
Dame Danks, too, says, and she must know,
A finer never made a show.

All talk is now of May-day's fun,
And who's to wrestle, dance, or run :
You'll see both me and Walter Watts .
With flowers and oak-leaves in our hats.

PHILLIS.

Then, there's our plough-boy, Jemmy Rook;
You cannot think how gay he'll look:
Dame said, last night, there won't be seen
A smarter lad upon the green.

And I shall wear a new stuff gown,
And so will Sue and Lucy Brown:
And Master says, he does intend
To give us each a groat to spend.

I've been so busy all the week
To make white shirts for Jem and Dick;
And well employ'd has Dame been too
In trimming caps for me and Sue.

ROGER.

You may be fine, with all my heart;
No doubt but we shall all be smart:
I've just been told by Peggy Locke
The bells will ring by six o'clock.

PHILLIS.

I don't think I shall sleep to-night:
I'll rise to-morrow with the light;
And milk my cows, and feed my pigs,
And then prepare for May-day rigs.

THE COTTAGE GRANDFATHER.

While nobles are anxious for honour and state,
The peasants are cheerful and void of debate ;
No fame to allure them, no riches to prize,
And all that is wanting contentment supplies.
Their labours with pleasure they daily pursue,
Though small their possessions, their wants are
but few ;

Content in their stations, though simple their fare,
Strangers to ambition, and strangers to care.
Returning from labour, in yonder green glade,
Behold aged Damon hath shoulder'd his spade ;
While Rosa, his grandchild, with health in her
face,

Runs out from the cottage to meet his embrace.
The tales of the day she is anxious to tell,
And gives him a nosegay of cowslips to smell :
Thus, all his attention she seems to engage,
The pride of his heart, the delight of his age.
In his old rustic settle, when seated is he,
The sweet little prattler climbs up on his knee ;

A glow of delight on her cheek is display'd,
While she tells him the pranks that her pet-lamb
has play'd.

The toils of the day are by Damon forgot,
Contentment and peace are the guests of his cot ;
He knows no vexation, with health he is blest ;
Each day brings him labour, each night gives him
rest.

THE MAY SHOWERS.

Hark ! the little vallies sing,
Mantled with the robe of spring !
Angry tempests dare not frown ;
Flora wears her vernal crown.

Birds, embower'd in blooming sprays,
Warble sweet their songs of praise ;
Breezes, laden with perfumes,
Fan their tender, glossy plumes.

On the plains the shepherds sing :
New-born beauties round them spring :
Flocks and herds, and plants, and flowers,
Banquet on the fruitful showers.

Glowing smiles the rainbow sheds
O'er my garden's bright'ning beds :
Mark the joyful tears of May
Dancing on each blooming spray !

Tender buds are now made bold :
Blushing beauties they unfold ;
And, behold, each thirsty plain
Is refresh'd, and smiles again !

MORNING TWILIGHT.

Through the vales the breezes sigh ;
Twilight opes her bashful eye ;
Peeping from the east, she brings
Dew-drops on her dusky wings :
And the lark, with wak'ning lay,
Upsprings, the harbinger of day.

Now, behold ! the blushing sky
Tells the bridegroom sun is nigh !
Nature tunes her joyful lyre,
And the trembling stars retire.
Him the east, in crimson drest,
Ushers, nature's welcome guest.
And the mountains of the west
Seem to lift their azure heads,
Jealous of the smile he sheds.

Glory, beaming from on high,
Charms devotion's lifted eye ;
Bliss, to which sluggards ne'er were born,
Waits the attendants of the dawn.

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

Loud bursts the brazen trump of war ;
The vallies echo from afar ;
And thousands feel the martial flame,
And pant to bear a hero's name.

The fiery steeds start at the sound,
And, neighing, beat the trembling ground ;
The bloody signals wave on high,
And valour beams from every eye.

See firmly Britain's sons advance,
Nor dread the countless hosts of France ;
Glories on all their banners shine,
They act like giants cheer'd by wine.

High mounted on his thund'ring car,
Exulting rides the god of war ;
And, while he shakes the frowning skies,
Terrific glooms around him rise.

Vengeful he pours his fiery breath,
And every blast is big with death ;
The light'ning fury of his eye
Darts through the darkness of the sky.

Danger, and her appalling train,
Rush forth ; our heroes all disdain :
Bright shines their valour ; Fear stalks by ;
She turns and hides her haggard eye.

Hark ! the victorious shout is risen ;
It sweeps the bright'ning brow of heaven ;
And proudly claims an angel's lay
To swell the triumphs of the day.

BALLAD.

A MOTHER AT THE GRAVE OF HER SON.

The crescent moon, with glimmering light,
Rode through a dusky sky ;
And, rock'd by winds, the bird of night
Began its doleful cry.

When, lo ! a hapless mother's sighs
Amidst the gloom were heard ;
With throbbing heart, and tearful eyes,
She sought the lone church-yard.

Alone she trod the willow'd shade,
Where skulls and coffins lay ;
And midnight ghosts to haunt were said
The unfrequented way.

Screen'd, as she thought, from human view,
She sigh'd without restraint ;
And, shelter'd beneath a shade of yew,
Pour'd forth her sad complaint.

Fast did the tide of sorrow run,
Which drown'd her weeping eyes :
“ Alas ! ” she cried, “ my dearest son
Hears not his mother's sighs.

“ Thou tyrant, Death, thy venom'd dart
Hath made my woes complete :
For, oh ! this dreadful stroke my heart
Was unprepared to meet.

“ Deluded thus by Hope was I
That health his days would crown :
Why were my prospects raised so high,
For Death to cut them down ?

“ But still this thought shall cheer my heart,
While Faith points to the skies ;
Where Death no more shall hurl his dart,
To wound Affection's ties.”

THE SAILOR'S FUNERAL.

Rais'd on the deck, bereft of life,
Where he had toil'd 'mid storm and strife,
The sailor lies, in hammock bound,
While his brave shipmates gather round.

One says, " No crew e'er parted
With an old mate more honest hearted ;
For well did he his part perform —
How stout was he amidst the storm ! "

A second cries, — " And many a scar
Poor Jack receiv'd at Trafalgar :
Sure on the main there cannot be
A better seaman than was he."

They now commit him to the deep,
Where Neptune's heroes safely sleep ;
For whirlwind's rage nor war's dread roar
His noble zeal will waken more.

The prayers are said, the generous crew
In sorrow take their last adieu ;
With feelings that become the brave
They watch awhile his unmarked grave.

So when the tear which friendship calls
Is shed, and dried fast as it falls,
Each sailor drinks, the scene to close,
His widow's health, his soul's repose.

TO AN INFANT SLEEPING.

Rest, sweet babe, while rosy slumbers
Court thy little placid brow ;
Rest, while nought thy heart encumbers :
Fate is smiling o'er thee now.

By pleasing dreams perhaps beguiled,
Joy doth feast thy raptured sense,
For no guilt hath yet defiled
Thy fair and blooming innocence.

Soft I'll kiss thy lips of roses,
With delight to see thee blest ;
On thy pillow peace reposes,
There her downy wings to rest.

For, as yet, thou lovely creature,
No dark woe thy joy defiles ;
And may Heaven on all thy future
Deign to shed propitious smiles !

TO MY FATHER, WITH A PRESENT.

Dear father, with a grateful sense,
Your kindness I review ;
But to return full recompense
Is more than I can do.

Yet gratitude may joy declare :
Delight inspires my lay,
To think that now 'tis all my care
A something to repay.

This little gift you will receive :
'Tis little, it is true ;
But yet accept it, and believe
I'll share my last with you.

On this resolve you may rely —
With tears shall be bedew'd
The deed which makes thy bosom sigh
At my ingratitude.

TO MISS CHARLOTTE BEDFORD AND
MISS MARY BEAUFORD.

Should this offend, will you excuse
A heart which truly tells
'Tis not presumption prompts my muse,
But gratitude compels.

And though mine is an humble lot,
Yet humble hearts can love ;
Your kindnesses I've not forgot,
Which I've been led to prove.

And if to Heaven in your behalf
My prayers accepted be,
Then daily here around your path
Shall flow prosperity.

May God, who doth your ways behold,
Reserve a crown above,
And with a recompense tenfold
Reward your works of love !

TO THE REV. E. A. BRAY.

Since gratitude inspires my humble lay,
To you, sir, let me this just tribute pay ;
And, in your goodness, condescend to take
The sole return which Nature's child can make.
By Heaven's own hand may'st thou rewarded be,
For all the kindness thou hast shown to me !
Should it an answer to my prayers bestow,
Unceasing mercies round thy path shall flow.
Long may the Almighty deign thy life to spare,
That long thy flock may prove thy guardian care ;
And thus may'st thou, when death dissolves life's
ties,

Set, like the sun, more gloriously to rise !
And when from heaven the great archangel's lay
Proclaims the dawn of an eternal day,
When the great Judge of earth, in light array'd,
Comes on, mid seraphim in host display'd,
On thee, with gracious smiles may he look down,
On thee bestow the never-fading crown !
And may thy flock, with joy, thy triumph see,
Those who were led in Virtue's paths by thee ;
May they, with thee, ascend the splendid way
That leads to realms of everlasting day ;
With seraphs join Jehovah's praise to sing,
At whose right hand unfading pleasures spring !

TO MRS. BRAY.

Though conscious, dear madam, how great is your
goodness,

Yet words to express it I never shall find :
I fear to offend ; pray, pardon my rudeness :
Heaven knows that respect with presumption 's
combined.

How oft, when the frowns of malignity darted,
From many, whose hatred I never deserved,
I've wept ! for, alas ! even hope had departed,
And I thought not a friend like thyself was
reserved.

Unconscious that any I ever offended,
Yet assailed, too, by envy, I knew not for what ;
By Heaven and by you since I thus am befriended,
My fears and my sorrows will soon be forgot.

And O ! may that God, who all sorrows can
lighten,
Reward all the kindness you 've shown unto me !
That the smiles of his goodness your pathway may
brighten,
For ever the prayer of your servant shall be.

TO MY CANARY.

Oh ! sweet little captive, how sad is thy strain !
What is it can prompt thee like this to complain ?
All these little murmurs I justly may chide,
For daily, thou knowest, thy wants are supplied.

Do the shady trees tempt thee to quit thy abode ?
Do the beauties of Nature invite thee abroad ?
If instinct informs thee 'tis summer's bright day,
I then do not wonder that thou wouldst away.

But where, pretty captive, oh ! where wouldst thou
go,
When mountains and vallies are buried in snow,
When groves are dismantled and cold the sun's
beam,
And winter's chill breath binds each sweet gliding
stream ?

So pray be contented, my sweet little bird,
For I can assure thee thy fate is not hard ;
Though nature's inviting in summer's gay form,
Know, that after the sunshine there follows the
storm.

SEPARATION.

Oh ! when from those we hold most dear
We're called by fate to part,
'Tis nature prompts the sorrowing tear,
While anguish wounds the heart.

The sweet affections of the breast
To quench in vain we aim ;
They grow too strong to be repress,
And heighten to a flame.

But who can break the chains of fate,
Or e'en their strength impair ?
Who from the heart eradicate
What Heaven hath planted there ?

And though from friends so dear we rove,
We only lose their sight ;
Reflection fans the spark of love,
And keeps its lustre bright.

While Hope, with healing power, descends,
Though pensive tears may flow ;
She tells her soothing tale, and lends
A wing to every woe.

GRATITUDE.

When from his throne of uncreated light
 Jehovah rose, array'd in glorious might,
 Through boundless space his eye a ray bestow'd,
 And tides of goodness from his bosom flow'd :
 Angels were awed ; each, trembling, held his lyre,
 And watch'd the progress of th' Almighty Sire :
 His dread approach by Chaos soon was felt,
 Where darkness from eternity had dwelt.
 But, lo ! He spake — “ Let there be light,” said
 He :

The mandate echoed through immensity :
 Forth from the east was launch'd the glorious sun,
 And seem'd rejoiced his azure course to run ;
 His matchless power the firmament declared ;
 Marshall'd in glory, countless worlds appeared ;
 Earth smiled below, in various blooms array'd ;
 Ten thousand wonders were at once display'd !
 All anxious seem'd their Maker's praise t' express,
 For all was beauty, all was happiness,
 When man, as Nature's lord, was form'd to prove
 His great Creator's boundless power and love.

All was complete, and, lo ! the forming God
 His benediction on his works bestow'd ;
 The morning stars brake forth in rapturous lays,
 And heaven and earth seem'd rivals in his praise.
 Th' angelic hosts, elate with grateful mirth,
 With harps celestial hail'd fair Nature's birth :
 They view'd the works their God had form'd and
 bless'd ;

On every scene his goodness was impress'd :
 Grateful they bow'd before the eternal throne,
 And made Creation's happiness their own.
 Thus, heavenly Gratitude, may'st thou inspire
 Each human breast with thy celestial fire,
 That when our Maker's mercies we explore,
 Like angels, we may gratefully adore,
 Rejoice in that of which we are possess'd,
 And deem it blessing to see others bless'd.

VIRTUE.

Hail, heavenly Virtue ! power divine,
Each heart-endearing charm is thine,
Who dost all woe beguile !
No danger nor alarm thou dread'st,
For o'er the sacred path thou tread'st
Peace sheds her hallow'd smile.

Pure is thy bliss without alloy :
For thee unceasing streams of joy
Flow from unnumber'd springs ;
And heavenly fruits yield thee supply ;
And shining seraphs from on high
Drop fragrance from their wings.

Object of Heaven's peculiar care,
In thy retreats no dark despair,
No guilty fears are found :
Joys rise with each succeeding day,
While conscience, clear as morn's bright ray,
Darts healthful beams around.

When Fortune's adverse storms arise,
And thunders shake the vaulted skies,
No cloud thy breast defiles :
Superior to the shocks of fate,
Thou valuest at an equal rate
All earthly frowns and smiles.

Remote thou dwell'st from rage and strife;
To thee is shown the path of life :
And while the passions lie,
Subject to thy divine control,
Thou shedd'st thy sunshine o'er the soul,
And fitt'st her for the sky.

By thee alone is joy possess'd,
Pure joy, which nothing can molest,
A balm for every wound :
A power divine in thee is stored ;
And God has pledged his sacred word,
If sought, thou shalt be found.

AFFECTION.

Affection is a spark divine,
A pledge of Heaven below ;
For every joy she does refine,
And lightens every woe.

Her powers, like balmy drops, distil :
Her healing charms are shed,
Like Herman's dew on Sion's hill,
Or ointment on the head.

She loves the kind, the blest employ,
The abodes of woe to cheer :
To make the widow sing for joy,
And dry the orphan's tear.

Her breast's from selfish interests free ;
She bends to Pity's call ;
For, like her glorious Author, she
Displays a love for all.

She doth the storms of sorrow calm;
Her smile can joy impart;
Her lenient hand procures a balm
To heal the bleeding heart.

When oft misfortunes are renew'd,
And Fate appears severe,
We find it soften'd when bedew'd
With sweet Affection's tear.

Almighty Power ! in whom I live,
This grace to me impart;
With every other virtue, give
A sympathising heart.

FORTITUDE.

Blest Fortitude ! thou dost impart
A balm which heals the wounded heart :
'Tis thy consoling power that cheers
Man's journey through this vale of tears.
Oh ! how supremely blest is he
Whose soul is anchor'd firm on thee ;
Peace is his pilot, while he braves
The force of life's tempestuous waves.
Hope in his breast her sunshine sheds :
His heart no evil tidings dreads :
The frowns of fate he can defy :
The place of his defence is high.
Distress and sorrow may oppose
His path, and friends may turn to foes ;
But still resign'd, his course he steers,
And greatly feels, but bravely bears.
His faith disarms the power of death ;
And slander's pestilential breath
Will ne'er annoy the peaceful breast
Which Heaven's approving smile has blest.

THE VANITY OF RICHES.

'Tis Wisdom speaks! — ye great, attend!
 Aloud she cries, “ Shall riches tend
 To make its owner look with scorn
 On those he calls the lower born?
 Can honour, fame, renown, or wealth,
 Secure that peerless blessing, health?
 Can they one hour prolong man's breath,
 Or bribe th' impartial hand of Death?
 To please his ear, men may repeat,
 ‘ Most mighty, noble, high-born, great;’
 Yet all these sounding titles must
 At last conclude with ‘ Dust to dust.’
 Death to the great pays no respect;
 No substitute will he accept;
 For slaves, and lords, and clowns, and kings,
 He to an equal meanness brings.
 At mighty rulers of the earth,
 At men of noble blood and birth,
 He points his dart; and, lo! they fall,
 To share the common lot of all.
 Thus bends their power, to death a prey:
 They mingle with their native clay:

They then no lofty titles crave :
There's no ambition in the grave :
No stately honours there await,
As no distinctions mark the great.
To wound no more will scorers aim,
For kindred with the worms they claim :
Unconsciously they sleep in death ;
Their honours vanish with their breath ;
Their pomp is as a summer flower,
Whose beauties droop beneath a shower.
Ah, what did he of old proclaim,
The man who had for wisdom fame,
Whom Heaven abundantly did bless,
All heart could wish did he possess,
When his achievements he survey'd,
And pomp in Reason's scale was weigh'd ?
Thus its true value he express'd :
' All is but vanity at best.' "

FROM ISAIAH.

In Judah is ceased the sad voice of bewailing :
Jehovah has sent her a glorious reprieve :
Her day-star is risen with beams full of healing ;
And beauty for ashes shall Sion receive.

Behold, she is loosed from her sackcloth and
sadness ;
And awhile the fair garment of praise she
assumes :
The desert breaks forth into carols of gladness ;
Like Carmel and Sharon the wilderness blooms.

Again she is known as the Lord's holy nation,
And all her waste places are graciously heal'd :
Her glory is raised on a rock of salvation :
The strength of his arm hath her Saviour
reveal'd.

The place of his rest shall be glorious in Sion :
While peace and sweet concord their charms
shall display :

The lamb shall lie down with the leopard and lion,
And infants with dragons shall fearlessly play.

The dew of his blessing her children shall nourish;
While showers of salvation shall drop from the
skies :

Instead of the bramble, the fir-tree shall flourish ;
And roses and myrtles for briers shall rise.

The redeem'd of the Lord shall receive consolation:
The Lord as their shepherd his care shall display:
With songs they shall compass the hills of sal-
vation ;
And tears from their eyes shall be all wiped
away.

HYMN

OF GRATITUDE TO MY CREATOR.

My God, thy goodness to express
With gratitude I'll aim ;
And all my powers shall join to bless,
And praise thy holy name.

While on thy mercies large and free
My rising hopes shall rest,
Assured my humble strain shall be
By thine acceptance bless'd.

Could angels' notes inspire my tongue,
Who chant in heaven's bright spheres,
How proudly would my grateful song
In fervour rival theirs!

Upholden by thy gracious hand,
My all to thee I owe ;
And round my path at thy command
Unceasing mercies flow.

And since thy mercy's over all
Thy works, while I adore,
The blest reflection is a call
To love and praise thee more.

Thou deign'st to lend a gracious ear
To every creature's cry;
Dependent on thy tender care
Earth's countless millions lie.

But though thy love is all divine
In what thine hands have done:
Great God! we see thy mercies shine
Transcendent in thy Son.

For man was veil'd his glorious might,
And by his death hath he
Brought immortality to light,
And made our peace with thee.

Great God! for such stupendous love
What thanks can mortals raise!
How weak would heaven and nature prove
To show forth all thy praise!

HYMN

ON THE NATIVITY.

Behold, he comes ! the glorious King !
His blessings to diffuse ;
On shining clouds the angels bring
To earth the gladd'ning news.

But there 's no pomp nor state display'd
To hail him from on high ;
For our salvation he hath laid
His dazzling glories by.

Blest Jesus ! we our vows will pay :
Our grateful thanks we'll raise :
And gladly celebrate the day
With joyful songs of praise.

And when thy second advent comes,
Though bound in earth's dark bed,
At thy command, the long-closed tombs
Shall yield up all their dead.

O ! may we then, with glad surprise,
Obey the dread command,
And to a life immortal rise,
And stand at thy right hand.

HYMN

ON THE RESURRECTION.

O! all ye shining hosts of heaven,
Your songs of rapture swell;
Jesus, your conquering King, is risen;
Vanquish'd are Death and Hell.

His mighty hand, stretch'd forth to save,
Alone renews our breath;
He rose triumphant from the grave,
And crush'd the tyrant Death.

With pity fallen man he view'd,
Ere wrath from heaven was hurl'd;
And freely shed his precious blood,
To save a guilty world.

Ye elders, to the victor given,
Your crowns cast down, and sing
His praise, and let the highest heaven
With hallelujahs ring;

While earth below, in humbler lays,
Shall join the lofty strain—
“Jesus the glorious sceptre sways,
And shall for ever reign!”

HYMN

ON HEAVEN.

Lord, what joy thou hast prepared
For the children of thy love !
What on earth can be compared
To the blissful realms above !

'Tis past finite comprehension,
All the heavenly joys to know ;
Yet, through thy great condescension,
Thou hast given a glimpse below.

Blest abode ! O happy station !
There reigns everlasting day ;
There's no sorrow, no vexation,
Every tear is wiped away.

Pain is not their joys consuming,
No disaster reigns above,
But immortal health is blooming,
Sacred peace and endless love.

Hell can there no stripes engender ;
 Stopp'd is Slander's venom'd breath ;
No more grief can Envy render ;
 Virtue wears her lili'd wreath.

No malignity devising
 Arts to wound th' unthinking breast ;
Neither dire alarms surprising
 Souls in that eternal rest.

Sorrow never can awaken
 Anguish on that peaceful shore ;
There no sad farewells are taken ;
 They who meet there part no more.

There God shows his power is glorious,
 Round his throne their songs they raise ;
Through his blood they are victorious,
 And to him they give the praise.

THE DEATH OF A CHRISTIAN.

How lovely is death, when, on Jesus reposing,
The soul can her trust in his mercy display :
When scenes of affliction and anguish are closing,
And angels stand waiting to bear her away !

She fears not fell Death, as the tyrant advances ;
Her trust is in One who is mighty to save :
Faith points at her Saviour, and, as her eye glances,
She views a bright star through the gates of the
grave.

By songs full of mercy her rapt ear is charm'd ;
Display'd to her view are the portals above :
The monster, of all his dread terrors disarm'd ;
Mortality closes in triumph and love.

The conflict is ended. While weeping friends
gather
Around the departed, their loss they bewail :
The soul she is borne to the arms of a Father,
Where seraphim wait her arrival to hail.

ON THE DEATH OF MY LATE KIND MISTRESS,
MRS. GEN. HUGHES.

How oft, in memory's page, I view
Her whom I still revere!
And gratitude shall oft bedew
Her grave with many a tear.

For in her heart each virtue reign'd,
While, prompt at Pity's call
To each distress she proved a friend,
And lived in peace with all.

Resign'd, she left this vale of tears
For mansions in the skies :
Mature in virtue as in years,
She clos'd her placid eyes.

Though thus of life may death bereave,
His direful sting is lost :
While faith proclaims, th' ambitious grave
No victory has to boast.

For when the great archangel's voice
Shall echo through the skies ;
The dead in Christ shall all rejoice,
And in his likeness rise.

IN TOKEN OF RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF
THE LATE COLONEL BRAY.

Blest shade ! thou hast her debt to Nature given :
 Thy happy soul hath quitted earth for heaven ;
 Welcomed by seraphs to that blest abode,
 T' enjoy the smiles of thy approving God.
 With sorrow bending o'er thy mournful bier,
 Affection pays the tributary tear :
 Thou wast by all, that e'er thy goodness proved,
 Esteem'd for justice, and for kindness loved ;
 Thou wast through life, while bright thy virtues
 shone,
 A friend to many, and a foe to none.
 Heaven deem'd thee meet to join its shining spheres,
 Calm was thy exit from this vale of tears :
 Sweetly with Hope did Peace combine, to pour
 Propitious smiles on thy departing hour.
 As when, at eve, the sun attains the west,
 His setting radiance gilds the mountains' crest ;
 While peaceful splendour crowns the lovely scene,
 Mantled in crimson, with a smile serene,
 He sinks — and thus the thought inspires delight,
 To rise more glorious, and to shine more bright.

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

Oh ! why so soon, sweet babe, oh ! why
Hast thou resign'd thy breath ?
Swept by rude Fate thy bloom doth lie —
Thine eyes are seal'd in death.

Thou didst a mother's care employ ;
And oft she fondly shed
A tear of tenderness and joy,
Beside thy cradle's bed.

No more, as born for her alone,
She clasps thy rising charms :
Untouch'd by sin, thy soul is flown
To thy Creator's arms.

Yes ! thou hast gain'd a peaceful shore,
And left a world of woes ;
Safe landed at the port, before
Life's stormy billows rose.

THE END.

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